

Greetings to  
the homeland  
of my  
ancestors



Submitted to the Historical Society and the city of Kusterdingen as acknowledge of gratitude for the wonderful support in the past years and in reminder of the great work of Dr. Walter Schmid, which he had summarized in his book “Die Auswanderung auf den Härten”.

My special thanks are dedicated to Mrs. Moncia Schmid, as without her help, the finalization of these re-established family links wouldn't have been possible; and to Mrs. Rose Schmid and Mr. Wandel for the wonderful support in transcribing the old letters of the Schettler siblings and finding living relatives.

Finally I would like to thank my friends and cousins around the world as well as my family, who have supported me in the production of this booklet.

compiled and translated by Ruediger Kemmler

Version: 2.3 @November 2022 Ruediger Kemmler

## Origin of pictures

The pictures of the front cover and on the pages of the villages were originally painted by Ernst Bernhard. Generously he provided a selection of 13 pictures for the annual calendar 2007 of the Historical Society of the Haerten.

Ernst Bernard has painted the villages of the Haerten in many pictures and in all types of techniques. Therefore the Board of the Historical Society has asked Ernst Bernhard to provide a selection of his pictures for the calendar. He fulfilled the wish in his generosity immediately and therefore the Historical Society was able to present the characteristic elements of the Haerten from an artists perspective.

Ernst Bernard was born in 1919 in Jägerndorf / Sudeten territories. He received his first education in drawing and painting from Professor Ernst Schilder at the University of Troppau. After war service and imprisonment (1939-1945) he could start his teaching profession in 1946. Ernst Bernard instructed as art teacher in schools in Tuebingen, Lustnau and Kusterdingen as well as Professor at the University of Reutlingen generations of students and teachers in art work.

Other pictures included in this books have been provided by the respective authors.

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# Immenhausen



## **Johann Jacob Kuttler (\*16.4.1828) – 1852**

*By Dorian Woods, Tuebingen*

It has been a fascinating journey, coming to find and meet my relatives in Germany. The baptism of my daughter in the Immenhausen church was a moving experience for me and something that will have meaning for Elisabeth in the years to come. Learning about the past has taught me more about myself and has brought our family closer together in more ways than one. Thank you to all of the people who have worked to keep history alive.



# Jettenburg

## **Mathäus Bader (\*3.5.1707) – 1752**

*By Lucille Webster, Renton, Washington*

Hello to all my German cousins!

We have been to Germany twice and it is a very beautiful country. In fact, we may be there again next spring. I have not been to your part of Germany, though, because I did not know then about my ancestors being from there. Interestingly, my cousin's daughter who also descended from the Baders is now temporarily living in Frankfurt. Her husband is working there right now. They also lived there 15 years ago and at least one of her sons was born in Germany. Her son will be going to college in Germany. Sometimes we return to our roots and do not know it, do we not?

It is fascinating to find my ancestor's home and trace where they have come since. They started in the eastern part of the United States and moved many places but my particular line moved to Ohio, Illinois, and Iowa where I was born. I have lived in Iowa, Florida, Colorado, Vermont, and now in the Seattle, Washington, area, in a town named Renton.

Washington is also a very pretty state with tall mountains like Switzerland, lakes, ocean, forests in the west part of the state and desert in the east part of the state. There is much contrast in scenery. My original state of Iowa is also pretty with green rolling hills in

most places but some flat land. It is mostly farming country but also factories in the cities. My Bader/ Borders descendants were farmers but later some lived in town. My grandfather was a cabinet maker, my father was an electrician. My last job before retiring was working with contracts for The Boeing Company who makes airplanes. So, we have done many things since leaving Germany.

I had a good family with lots of love.

It is so nice to connect with you in Germany. If you come to Washington, please contact me. I would like to meet my German cousins or friends.



## Jakob Digel (\*14.7.1850) – 1883

*By Arlene Hollenbeck, Sioux Falls, South Dakota*

Greetings to the Historical Society in Kusterdingen, and thank you to Ruediger Kemmler for the opportunity to tell you about my family history. My name is Arlene Hollenbeck. I am the Great Granddaughter of Johann Jakob Digel and Christina Barbara Reichardt Henes Digel who arrived in Marcus Iowa, USA about August 1, 1883. When Jacob married Christina on 27 July 1876 in Jettenburg, Tuebingen, Württemberg, Germany she was a widow with three children, Johann George Henes, Johann Jacob Henes and Cristina Barbara Henes.

Christina was the widow of Johann Georg Henes who died after almost nine years of marriage. Christine and her first husband Georg Henes had an inn called "Zum Ochsen".

It was located on the road between Tuebingen and Reutlingen in Jettenburg. I believe Christine and Jakob Digel sold the inn and used the money to come to America and buy land near Marcus Iowa shortly after they arrived. On 18 August 1883 Jacob Digel paid J.G. Whalen \$3100.00 for 155 acres of land southwest of Marcus, Iowa.

I have been told the German government would not allow large sums of money to leave the country. People

would sew money and jewelry into their clothes and smuggle it out of the country. I wonder if Jacob and Christina did this. They had to have brought the money with them to buy land within 3 weeks of their arrival in the USA. The land was bought in Jacob's name only but it did become Christina's land when Jacob died.

I have a copy of a newspaper story that is a tender heart wrenching account of Jacob Digel's death. Jacob was heading home from Marcus on Christmas Eve 1903, his horse bolted and he was thrown against the barn, breaking his neck. He was taken to the doctor in Marcus who said he needed to be sent to a doctor in Sioux City Iowa, 50 miles away. Jacob was put on a train with his wife and his cousin, Jacob Mayer. He died as the train reached Sioux City. Being a good German, Jacob enjoyed his beer and schnapps which may have had something to do with the accident.

Christine Barbara Reichardt Henes Digel gave birth to 16 children by 2 husbands from September 1867 to March 1892. A span of 25 years. She was 21 when the first child was born and 46 when the last child was born. Nine of these children lived to adulthood. Martin Digel died at the age of 20 from a gun accident. The 2 daughters, Barbara and Minnie, never married and died at old age. The 2 Henes sons married and had children but at this time I have very little information on these families. The 4 Digel sons married and had 7 children

among them, all girls. Without sons to carry on the family name, our branch of the Digel name in the USA no longer exists. There are Digel's in the USA but I have never been able to connect them to my Digel branch. When Edna Digel, my Aunt, died in 1991 she was the last person in our history to carry the Digel name.

The 4 Digel sons were Ernest, who was the father of 4 daughters. Carl, who had no children. Emil, who had 1 daughter and Oscar who was the father of Edna and Irene. Irene was my mother. My mother married Elmer Anderson, who came to the USA from Sweden at the age of 3. My parents farmed south of Marcus Iowa. I have one brother, Clarence. We both are married and each has 2 daughters and 1 son. My husband and brother were farmers and truck drivers but are now retired. I am a retired Dental Hygienist.

I have been in contact with Digel relatives in Germany for many years. Otto Digel of Stockach Germany is a 2nd cousin to my mother Irene Digel Anderson.

I have also had contact with distant relative on the Henes side because of work that Ruediger has done.

## **Johann Heinrich Dürr (\*03.08.1817) – 1832**

*By David and Rosa Miller, Edon, Ohio*

Greetings to Ruediger, Mr. Wandel, The Mayor, my distant relatives, and to all the people of Germany

My family came to the United States from Germany in 1832. They settled near the Great lakes in Crawford County, Ohio. Later, in 1860, my great great-grandparents moved to Williams County, Ohio, which is in the Northwest corner. That is where I live today. Our cemetery's are filled with people from the part of Germany you are living in. Through the last couple years I have been able to connect people with Ruediger, who connects them with their distant relatives over there. My wife and myself are planning a trip to your area in about 2 years when we are retired from our work and able to travel. I hope to meet a lot of distant cousins and people from there. We would love to have anyone visit us here in Ohio and we would show them where their relatives live and have a real good time. We wish you all the best, and hope we get a chance to meet and visit with you when we come to Germany.

Sincerely,

## **Christoph Walz (\*16.3.1864) – 1883**

*By H. Doyle Walz, Wichita, Kansas*

Historical Society in Kusterdingen

Greetings from Doyle Walz in Wichita, Kansas, USA

My brother Ron, my son Scott and I were able to visit Germany in 1999. We visited Jettenburg in the hopes of learning more about the area our forefathers came from. The language barrier hurt and we were unable to learn very much but did enjoy the visit. We were able to make contact with Ruediger Kemmler after we returned. At this time I am not sure how we were able to meet him, Tim Grauer, Aurora, Colorado, had a lot to do with this and it is not important how it happened, it is just important that it did happen. We've been able to learn more history since then. Ruediger stopped in Colorado to visit Tim and I was able to join them for a weekend in the year 2000.

We have been able to follow our family there back to the late 1400's and 1500's. Very interesting. We believe that my wife's grandfather, Antone Schafer, came from Baden Baden but have not been able to prove this. My maternal grandparents, Simons, we believe came from the Black Forest area.

We wish the Historical Society the very best in their research efforts.

Sincerely

# Kusterdingen





## **Johannes Grauer (\*19.8.1882) – 1906**

*By Steve Thunander, La Grange Park, Illinois*

Ruediger

Please pass along my heartfelt greetings to the Historical Society and the City of Kusterdingen on the occasion of the presentation of your ancestral research. I appreciate all of the help they have given you and so many of the distant relatives you have helped connect.

As a young boy growing up in Elkhart, Indiana, I knew few things about my mother's family history. I knew that her grandfather, Adam Riehle, had come from Germany and settled as a dairy farmer in Edgerton, Ohio. Many, many Germans settled in the same area. Of my grandfather, John Grauer, we knew only that he came from a small town called Kusterdingen, somewhere near Stuttgart. My mother was young when they died and there was little discussion of life in Germany.

Many years passed without knowing anything more until one of my sons was about to study in Augsburg for the summer of 2004. We planned a family vacation to coincide with his break and one of the priorities became to visit this little town of Kusterdingen, where ever it might be. About 6 weeks before the trip we

found Kusterdingen and some internet searches on my lunch hour lead me to Ruediger and his genealogical research. Within a week and several emails back and forth, I pretty much had my family history back many generations, on both sides of my mother's family.

Through subsequent emails and research, we were able to make contact with heretofore unknown cousins and were able to schedule a wonderful day with them in the delightful towns of Kusterdingen and Maehringen. We talked, shared pictures, toured the cities and saw places where surely my grandparents had been. It was a once in a life time experience for my family, one we will cherish forever. My mother was speechless as we related our stories upon our return.

Ruediger's work was able to fill a huge void in my family's past. Sure there are many questions that will never be answered, but we know a place and can connect to faces. I was grateful that we were able to thank Ruediger and his wife and son personally during a splendid dinner at a Muenchen beer hall!! We have thoroughly enjoyed the entire process of getting to know unknown relatives and learning more about your beautiful part of Germany.

I look forward to continuing my correspondence with all of my new found cousins and friends in Germany.

My very best regards,

## **Emilie Mozer (\*1.10.1880) – 1888**

*By Sandy and Gene Block, Claremont, California*

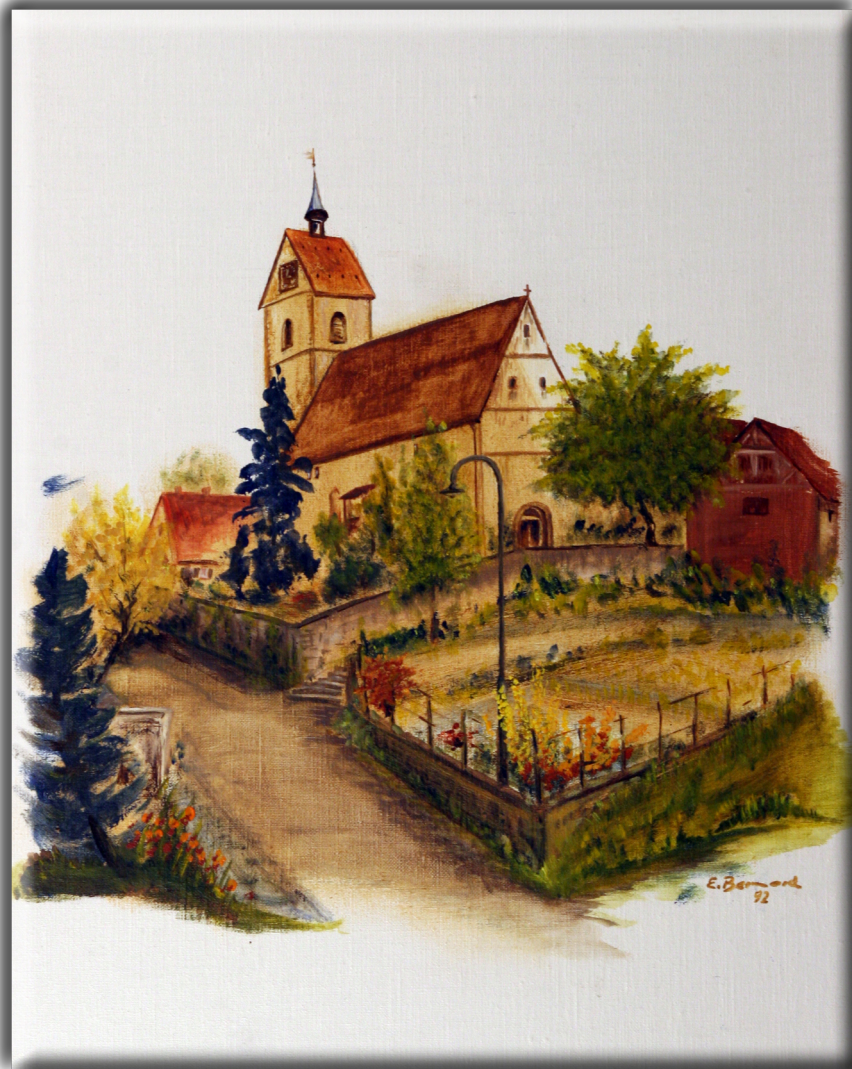
Greetings to the Historical Society in Kusterdingen, to the citizens of the city of Kusterdingen and my cousins. My name is Sandy Block and my great-grandparents have been Emilie Regelman and Adam Mozer who immigrated to the US from Kusterdingen in 1887. The family initially lived in Indiana and then some of them moved to St. Louis, Missouri where they still have many descendants. In June of 2002, Gene and I traveled to Kusterdingen to meet some of the descendants from the other half of the Mozer/Regelman family who did not immigrate but stayed in Kusterdingen area. It was a thrilling experience to meet them and we hope to return to the area one day soon. We were also fortunate to have Becky and Theresa Huber visit us the following year over their Easter vacation.

Professions of the adult descendants that we know about, cover quite a range. There are business executives, teachers, an attorney, veterinarians, a hotel manager, accountants, a public transportation manager, a fireman, office managers, shop owners, a mortgage officer for a bank, a merchandise manager, a US State Dept. diplomat, an architect and others.

Overall I would say those who came to the US made a good life for themselves and their families and took advantage of all their opportunities. Adam Mozer had several professions – one was a blacksmith.

Thanks to my husband's genealogy discoveries we now know about our wonderful German cousins.

Sorrowfully, because of the wars, the German language was not passed down and at this point in time, none of us speaks German; but my granddaughter, Caitlin Noll, has promised that she will begin studying German next year in school. Hopefully sometime when we visit we'll bring along our personal translator. If any of you wish to contact us our email address is [gsblock@linkline.com](mailto:gsblock@linkline.com).



# Mæhringen

**Johann Daniel Grauer (\*2.7.1797) – 1883 -  
Anna Maria Ruckwied (\*31.3.1800) - 1880**

*By Dick Kreitner, West Hartford, Connecticut*

Greetings to my distant Grauer and Ruckwied cousins in Mähringen and the near-by towns!

It was just about a year ago, in October 2005, that I did a Google search on the Internet and discovered Ruediger Kemmler's wonderful website about the homeland and emigration of my Grauer ancestors. Upon e-mailing Ruediger, I not only learned that we were related (very distant!) but also Ruediger put me in contact with other Grauer cousins in the US who had already compiled extensive information on the Grauer family and the descendants in the US. I was excited!

My great-great-grandfather, Daniel Grauer (born 02 Dec 1797) and his wife Anna Maria Ruckwied (born 31 Mar 1800) emigrated from Mähringen to New York State in 1833 and settled near Niagara Falls. The farmhouse they eventually lived in was passed down to future Grauer generations and was the birthplace of my mother, Ruth Grauer Kreitner. I have fond memories of the farm, where I spent much time as a child. In the attic of the farmhouse, we discovered a box of old letters and documents which I still have. Included are the passports of my great-great-grandparents and the discharge paper (Abschied) of

Daniel Grauer from the "Königlich Württembergischen Artillerie Regiment" on 11 April 1824. I treasure these documents!

When I came into contact with Ruediger, I discovered that he lives in Munich, where one of my daughters was living at that time. In fact, my wife and I had just visited Munich a month prior but did not know of Ruediger at the time. We were able to have Ruediger get a copy of "Die Auswanderung auf den Härten" and deliver it to our daughter. He also met our newest grandchild, Matteo, who was born in Munich in 2004. It is interesting that a descendant of Daniel Grauer was born in Germany 171 years after Daniel emigrated!

Our daughter and her family now live in Eindhoven in the Netherlands, so we still visit Europe often. It is our hope to visit Mähringen and the area soon, so we can see where our ancestors came from and meet other "distant" cousins!

Sincerely,



## **Johann Georg Grauer (\*13.1.1791) – 1831**

*By Colette Grower, Wasilla, Alaska*

Hello to all our Grower relatives. My husband is Harland John Grower and he is related to Johann Georg Grauer who came to this country and settled in New York in 1831. They settled in Cape Vincent, Jefferson County, New York, which is close to the St. Lawrence and the Canadian border. It was not until Tim Grauer got in touch with me that I was able to pull the family together, discovering a rich and interesting history. It seems the New York Growers were the only ones to change the name to Grower. This may have been done by immigration or a census taker. I do not think we know if they came in through Canada or up the Erie Canal from New York City, Ellis Island. John Georg Grower was an interesting man, a veteran of the Napoleonic Wars.

My husband and I have three children Eileen (30), Robert (26) and Jerry (23). Eileen is a school teacher. Robert is in California. He has a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Film. Jerry just graduated and has his first job as a social worker.

Harland is a letter carrier and I am a registered nurse for the State of Alaska. I work as a Nurse Consultant for the state. We moved to Alaska from New York in 1972.

I am very interested in genealogy and the past, as I really enjoy history. I continue to try to track my family, although I have uncovered fewer details than we have on the Grauer family. When we retire we hope to visit Germany and see where the Grauers came from.

Sincerely,

## Johannes Keinath (\*10.7.1838) – 1860

*By Jacky Bergstrom, Thousand Oaks,  
California*

Hello to the Historical Society of Kusterdingen & many cousins I have yet to meet.

It was email & the internet that brought a whole new world of genealogy to our family. Even today Sept. 24th I have received a message from a newly married niece who is asking about our ancestors in France & Germany. With the help of internet-cousins & websites bringing new ancestors to our knowledge, I can share a world of family history & know my brother's youngest daughter, Melinda, will carry on the search for our heritage yet unfound.

In 2001 Ruediger sent an invitation to come to Munich. I knew very little about my Germany heritage & the village of Maehringen. This is the home of my Great-Grandfather, Johannes Keinath, who left for America in 1857.

One special memory began in the Church of my Keinath family. The fact we could stand, sit & personally worship for a short time in St. Stephan church of Maehringen was an opportunity I'll never forget.

Some choice memories are so exceptional that words

are not enough to tell you & I struggle to do so. To see a baptismal font & know that Johannes & his siblings were each carried to that spot with mother & father, asking God's blessing for this new babe in arms. We could look into the same stained glass windows as they did so long ago. We turned to leave & there leaning on the back wall was a very large stone memorial created in 1775 to honor the love of Georg Friedrich Oberreuter in memory of his beloved wife Anna Maria Grauer. "A Memorial of Love" was the inscription across the top. Just before our trip here, I had found a record of Johannes's father, George Keinath, & his mother, Louisa Maria Oberreuter, a new family line. What a discovery here in St. Stephan.

The former Mayor Karl Härter came to the church by bicycle to welcome us & bring the key for entrance into the bell tower. We climbed the stairs to the chamber. The good Mayor told us the stories of the different bell construction, history & maintenance.

The webpage: <https://rkemmler.de/en/cities-of-my-research-in-germany/maeringen/> provides the actual sound of the two bells as heard before the big emigration wave. Again we can experience a sounds heard by ancestors in their life time as farmers in the fields in early 19th Century.

Jackie & Darryl Bergstrom leave our heart felt "Thank you" to those who bring us memories of our heritage

by book, research & electronic media. We salute you all.

*By ShaJuan Studer-Beertema, Assen, Holland*

My Ancestors

From Past to Present

### 1st Generation:



Joseph Franz Studer b: April 12, 1804 in the Canton Solothurn, Switzerland. He married Margaretha Steinhilber year 1833 in Wheeling, Virginia. Joseph died Oct. 03, 1893 in New Washington, Crawford Co., Ohio. Margaretha Steinhilber was born November 6, 1815 in Talheim, Württemberg, Germany and died Aug. 6, 1898 in New Washington, Crawford County, Ohio. Both Joseph and Margaretha came to the USA by boat in 1832.

### 2nd and 3rd Generation:



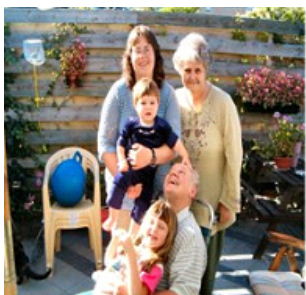
Joseph and Margaretha Studer's 2nd son Franklin Joseph Studer was born Feb. 4, 1839 in Crawford Co., Ohio and died at the early age of 40. He settled in Williams Co., Ohio and married twice. By Franklin's 2nd wife Margaret Nye (a Luxembourg immigrant) was born son John Julius Studer my

Great Grandfather. He was born Oct. 8, 1875 in Edon, Williams Co., Ohio and married Caroline Keinath born March 2, 1881 in Williams Co., Ohio. Her family immigrated from Maehringen, Germany in the early 1800's.

John and Caroline Studer had only one child (my Grandfather) Raymond John Studer born June 9, 1900. He lived until 1975 in Williams Co., Ohio.

Photo shows from left to right standing; John Julius Studer and wife Caroline Keinath Studer with baby Raymond John Studer (my Grandfather). Sitting in front is Margaret (Nye) Studer.

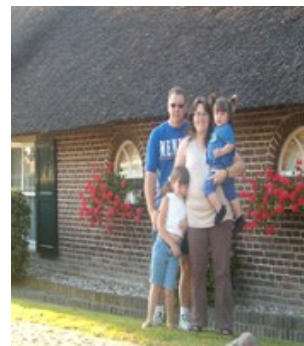
#### 4th and 5th Generation:



Raymond Studer married Gertrude Kimpel (a second generation German /American ) and they raised their family in Edgerton, Williams Co., Ohio. To them was born 6 children one of which was my father Robert George Studer who settled in McCurtain Co., Oklahoma.

In photo from left to right: Myself, ShaJuan Studer-Beertema holding my daughter Kaylee Beertema, beside me is my mother LaVon (Echols) Studer and sitting is my Dad Robert Studer sitting and holding my oldest daughter Ashley Beertema.

#### 6th Generation:



This is My family. We live in Assen, The Netherlands as I married a Dutch man and immigrated to Holland Aug 4, 1998.

Shown left is my husband Herman Beertema born Dec. 6, 1966 in Winschoten, Groningen, The Netherlands , oldest daughter

Ashley Beertema born July 29, 1999 in Assen, Drenthe, The Netherlands, Myself ShaJuan Studer-Beertema born Jan 1, 1968 in DeQueen Arkansas, holding daughter Kaylee Beertema born June 27th 2003.



## **Johann Adam Riehle (\*30.10.1864) – 1881**

*By Helen L. Riehle, Edgerton, Ohio*

Greetings,

I am 94 years old and live in the Northwest part of Ohio. My husband was Allen D. Riehle, whose Grandfather was Adam Riehle from Germany.

We married in 1939 and three children Lu Wana, Delton and Thelma. Allen and his father Ernest ere Dairy farmers and were noted for their cattle. Their note card shows the farm. We live in the small house.

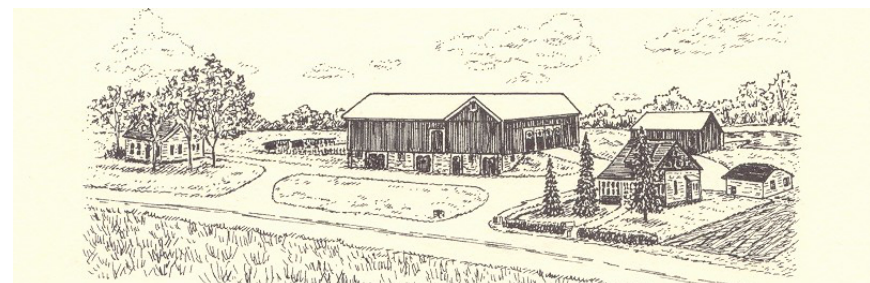
I use to teach in a one room School House in the country. Later I taught in Edgerton in town and a Second Grade class in Hicksville, Ohio total 28 years.

I attend the same Methodist Church that Adam Riehle attended in the area.

Enjoy writing to our new found friends in Germany.

Have a good day and good health.

Best wishes to you and Yours.



*By Thelma Riehle,, Edgerton, Ohio*

Dear friends,

Greetings from Ohio

It's hard to believe that after 100 years we may have linked up with our descendants of Adam Riehle from Germany.

I have heard some stories about the relatives from the other side of the ocean, but not so much. I can not imagine what it would have been like to leave home and family to a strange country not knowing the language or anybody. And how long it took to send a letter compared to now which probably felt like months.

Our area on how people live has changed since the early settlers came to northwest Ohio just as it has in the world. It use to be a family could live on forty acres of land. That is not the case now and most families have both families' parents working outside the home. Beside the time driving back and forth to work there is less time to gather around the table to here the stories – referring to the stories of our previous relatives like our grandparents.

Without telling the stories the new generations have lost the bonding of what our ancestors had to go through to survive and pass on that heritage. All we

have left to learn about our past is through material that has survived through the years.

Strange as it may seem is the transportation in our area is very poor compared to your area (Maehringen). We actually have gone backwards due to big business. In our small town, Edgerton, if you do not have a car one can not get around the area. There are no buses or trains that stop in town. It is not like in the earlier 1900's when the ancestors lived and could get around much easier and at all different times. So much for progress.

Two stories I would like to share:

A volunteer from Germany who is in his 70's and works at the Sander Village in Archbold, Ohio told me that yes, he does miss relatives (even though he has his own family here). But one thing he still misses about Germany (and something I would not have thought of) is the land. It is the mountains. He is homesick for the mountains. I imagine the earlier settlers felt the same way with the surroundings being different. You see in this area there are no mountains, just a few hills, some woods and flat land. So can you imagine the earlier immigrants ending up in this area. In southeast Ohio there are rolling hills but they are not mountains.

Recently Marvin Stoll from Edgerton, Ohio told me that

he had prune plum trees in his backyard that Adam Riehle brought back with him on one of his trips to Germany. Adam was an excellent horticulturist. I am not sure whether he brought back the seeds or grafted the twigs. With all the regulations now I doubt if one could bring plants back from Germany. Adam had an orchard near his home and he did make fruit wine. Adam would have been Marvin's grandfather. His mother Mamie had three kids all 3 of them had a start of the plum tree. Richard Stoll's trees are gone - Leota from Michigan lost her trees within the last few years due to a disease and Marvin had 6 trees and over the years only one survived. Just last year that plum tree developed a fungus and he had to cut it down. But can you imagine the genealogy of this plum tree that lasted from the time Adam Riehle brought it over from Germany It would have a history close to 100 years old.

I did learn that one of the cousins is supposed to have the clock that Adam Riehle brought with him from Germany. I assume it was after he got settled in the area, married and may be it was his last trips visiting his family in Germany. So it tells us that things were treasured as they came by ship.

I have not had a chance to share these stories with Renate Riehle but what a linkage if there farm still have plants from Adam Riehle's homestead.

Myself, as a great-granddaughter of Adam Riehle, I am 57 years old, single and live with my mother, Helen. I use to teach 4th grade in a small rural area called Cooney, Ohio north of Edon, Ohio. After being burnt-out in the teaching profession in the 1980's I did odd jobs and even lived for a while in Los Angeles, California.

I returned back to Ohio in 1992 and now work as a mail handler at the Fort Wayne, Indiana mail processing center. I help sort the mail and load and unload the trucks. I work 3.30 pm to midnight. The disadvantage is driving the 37 miles one way. It takes about 1 hour – half of it is city driving to get to work. But it is a pretty drive because it travels pass rural communities and even a few Amish homes that still travel by horse and buggy.

The leaves are just starting to turn and hopefully it will be a pretty fall. It is the woods that make the fall and as more woods are being cut down we see less of the pretty colored leaves.

The Germans that settled in this area were very hard working people and very religious people. Once settled most home would have a piano. Most kids would learn to sing and play the piano. That was their entertainment. Nowadays it is hard to find a home that has a piano – so much for canned music as it is called.

I have a proud heritage to honor and it all started from Adam Riehle's journey to the United States.

Greetings again to our unknown relatives across the ocean and someday I hope again to visit Germany and learn more about my ancestors.

Remember, to keep telling the stories so that our future generations can be very proud of our heritage.

Sincerely

## **Johann Georg Riehle (\*5.2.1879) – 1902**

*By Wes Riehle, Spokane, Washington*

Greetings from the Wesley Riehle Family to the Historical Society of Kusterdingen, to the Mayor of Kusterdingen and to my many cousins in Germany and America.

Thanks to Ruediger Kemmler, we have traced our family back to Ludwig Riehle (born approx. 1600). It appears most of our ancestors stayed in the Maehringen area. I have a cousin (Friedrich Willi Riehle) that was living in my great-grandfathers house in Maehringen until he recently passed away early in 2005.

Three of my ancestors came to the United States from Germany and were descendants of Johann Georg Riehle (born 5/27/1854). One was my great-aunt Anna Maria (Riehle) Knapp (born 2/22/1877) immigrated in 1898 from Maehringen. My grandfather, Johann Georg Riehle (born 2/05/1879) immigrated with his sister, Anna Marguerita (Riehle) Entrican in 1902. They all settled in the farming community of Harrington, Washington.

My grandfather Johann George Riehle eventually bought his own farm near Davenport, Washington raising cattle and wheat. This is the farm where I was raised along with my two brothers and sister. I

currently live in Spokane, Washington. I work as a manager for GE Healthcare, but was educated as Electrical Engineer. I have 5 children, one grandchild and have been married to my wife, Mary for 30 years. We are planning to visit Germany in the next couple of years. My wife has cousins living in Frankfort so it will be interesting to visit some of the cousins on both sides of our family.

Should anyone want to contact us here is our email address: [wwriehle@msn.com](mailto:wwriehle@msn.com)



Wankheim



## **Sigmund Bauer (\*1.6.1872 – 1866)**

*By Gerald "Jerry" Bauer, Wilmington,  
Delaware*

Greetings to all,

What a pleasant surprise it was to hear from Ruediger Kemmler a few years ago and to find we are long lost cousins. Through Ruediger's research it has been fun and enlightening to find out more about our family. My name is Gerald Bauer and my wife is Pat. We live in Wilmington, Delaware, USA. I retired from the DuPont Company after a 31 year career. I am the grandson of Sigmund Bauer and the son of Erwin Bauer. Pat and I have 3 daughters who have all married and we have 5 grandchildren. So the Bauer name will not continue from my children. However, we feel blessed that we have a very supportive family and we see them often and love them dearly. The Bauer family gatherings will always hold fond memories for me and I am very proud of my family roots. My best to everyone.

Sincerely,

## **Johann Georg Kaiser (\*4.10.1766) – 1820**

*By Dennis Eisenbeis, Bethel Islands,  
California*

Greetings from California to my cousins and their fellow townsman of Wankheim, which was home to my ancestors!

It is with great joy that I respond to Ruediger's request to join in this project to bring together long lost relatives of your citizens. Though our families are spread around the world, our hearts are always at home in the towns of our ancestors.

I have reviewed many pictures on websites of your beautiful cities, and I greatly look forward to visiting in person in the future.

tschuess,

## Sigmund Kemmler (\*9.5.1798) – 1817

*By Lucie Kasischke, Weißenbach im Tal*

I was still a school girl with long pigtails, when I lived in a large Swabian village on the Black Sea. I was born there, just like my father, grandfather and great- and great-great-grandfather. We were descendants of Swabians who had emigrated from Lake Constance to the river Neckar. – One day my grandmother called me to her side. She had a little book in her hand, and she read,

“Look here is written in Swabian – Sacha ond Sächla zom Lacha ond Lächla. “I was extremely surprised. “Is it possible to write in Swabian?” I asked my grandmother. This was new to me, because in school we had to talk and write in High German and that was not always easy.

Why should we say “Apfelbaum sagen” (apple tree) instead of “Äpflboom” and why should we say “Frühling” (spring) instead of “Frijor”? – My grandmother opened the small book and said to me: “Listen, in Germany, in Swabia they talk as we do here. With a funny smile she started reading:

*”s gloi Liesle, dui goldich Krott,  
secht ällaweil "du lieaber Gott!"  
ob sie verschrickt ob sie sich frait,*

*se secht's bei jeder G'legaheit,  
Ond wenn se sich verwondert hot,  
no secht se au: "Du liabar Gott!"  
Bis endlich d'Mama secht: "Du, Kend,  
dees sechscht fei nemme, deescht a Send!"  
Do neilich schneit's war ronter ka,  
dia Kloi nadirlich frait sich dra,  
z'mol secht se: "Mama, siesch den Schnee?  
Hot, der do droba wohl noch meh?" –  
"Ob der do droba no meh hot?  
Do secht mer doch der liabe Gott!"  
"Des woiß e“, secht des Kröttle g'schwend,  
"Doch hosch jo g'sagt, es sei a Send!"*

My hair has now turned gray and life has taken me down many roads. The other day I recalled the little Swabian poem that I memorized by heart from my grandmother.

And it all came back to me! I could remember everything! Word by Word. I drove into town and went to the largest book store and asked “Is the book – Sacha ond Sächla zom Lacha ond Lächla – still available? The sales person entered the title into her computer and said, as if it were the most natural thing

in the world, “yes we have it, it’s from the author Otto Keller.”

I was so happy as a young child and every time I open the little book, I felt close to my grandmother. “Zibeba” – Raisins. When we had to leave our village in Bessarabia, I was still a child. I had just learned to read and write German and Romanian. The rest of my life went in such a way that I was never again allowed to live in a closed village where we all were talking our Swabian dialect. In the places I lived whether it was my decision or enforced by governments I met all kinds of people and some times I was forced to learn a foreign language, sometimes thoroughly and sometimes just enough in order to be able to communicate simple things.

However, I never came across the word “Zibeba” and this word, in particular, was one of the most important words of my Swabian vocabulary as a child. So, I was rather surprised when my grandmother explained to me that raisins and currants, which I first became acquainted with in fairy tales and Christmas stories, were basically nothing more than our “Zibeba,” the word for raisins. was not familiar to me, they are dried grapes, which can be bought in any shop, decoratively wrapped in cellophane paper. But when I hear the word “Zibeba” then a curtain is drawn aside in my thoughts and gives me a glimpse into the long-gone days of my

childhood. I think of our village, stretching comfortably in a gentle valley in the sunny plains of the Black Sea, where the southern hillsides were covered with grape vines. When I hear the word “Zibeba” I think of the long, dry summer days, where the sun burned hot on house, yard and garden and the air held our breath. Nothing could be heard, except the occasional clucking of a hen or even a whole concert of chickens, which fell silent again as suddenly as it had started. The cracking of the big whip and a long drawn-out “Hüüü” echoed down from the threshing floor to us in the yard. We children then splashed around at the stone well trough or stuck our noses over the edge of the wooden draw well as the adults were putting a dark green “Harbus” (watermelon) into the brown wooden bucket and carefully lowered it into the ice cold, crystal-clear water on a clinking chain, so that it could be consumed later as a refreshment, sweetened with red-syrup.

In the evening, when the shadows of the house covered the wide yard, it got loud and busy and you could not hear the clucking hens anymore. But the big “Harbi” drove through the wide gate, laden with golden stalks of wheat and heavy ears of corn. We children ran after each harvest wagon as we wanted to ride the last bit to the threshing floor on the wagon. But riding as a stowaway required a lot of skill and courage, and it

was not hazard-free. On the back of each “Harbi,” there was a board that stood out about half a meter long. This now had to be grabbed while the wagon was moving and to swing onto it. Quite often you slipped from the board, landed hard on the ground, and were left behind.

With a bit of luck, you reached the wagon, panting hard, and managed to grip the board and pull yourself up with the last bit of strength you had.

But you had made it and now you were lying on it, confident of victory, and with your whole body facing the dusty road that was flying by, you realized the first time that the earth really does turn. Then the “Harbi” reached the point where mother could see us through the open door of the kitchen. The driver was not aware of our forbidden game because we were invisible for him as he was sitting in front of the mountain of unthreshed grain. However, mother was standing in the open door of the summer kitchen and shouting for me. The clear voice of my mother, with the deafening rattle of the metal wheels and the vibration of the board, spread through my abdominal wall to all my limbs, and she called my name with more and more menacing tones. I had no other choice but to give up my position on the Harbi board.

Plodding slowly toward my mother with my head hung down, I was awaiting the inevitable chastisement. But

just half way towards my mom I was reconciled with her. I had already feeling that I was lucky to be back on solid land as I still felt the pounding of the board in my stomach, not to mention the scratches on my arms and legs.

When I hear the word “Zibeba” today, I also think of a cool day in autumn. Grandfather was standing in the bake house and I ran in childish haste, stumbling over the threshold. Something special must be going on, as grandfather normally never stood at the baking oven because this was the work of the women. I stood beside him and looked into the big black oven hole, with the same serious expression as he did.

Together, mother and grandmother drew and pushed a long, strange rack out of the oven. And then another thing came to light. What was that? Large, heavy grapes hung from a few wires stretched tautly at different heights, just as they had been cut from the vines. The berries were tea-brown color now and round, just bursting with sweet juice. The image was so appetizing and enticing that I bent myself down and immediately picked one of the warm grapes. But before I could put them into my mouth, the adults standing around me, tall and menacing, had all sorts of objections: “They’re supposed to be ‘Zibeba!’” I heard and I was not brave enough to try to nibble a second time.

In winter, when the windows had icicles, the adults ate “Griabalaibla” and “Speckkuacha” together with hot tea in the morning by the light of the kerosene lamp, and when there was “Holubzie” (stuffed cabbage) and “Stampfar” for lunch, then I met “Zibeba” again in rice pudding, in sweet bread, and on dry rice as a side dish to the Sunday roast. But they were smaller and darker than when they were pulled out of the oven.

I noticed where mother kept the sweet, dried berries, and would sneak up on her when she needed a helping. The “Zibeba” were stored all year round, tightly pressed into tall little white wooden boxes. I have to admit that mother was not fussy, when I was standing beside her begging with my open hands.

## **Sigmund Kemmler (\* 3.4.1800) – 1834**

*By Hélène Lahuppe, Chignin, France*

My ancestor, Sigmund Kemmler, emigrated 1834 to France. His occupation was a blacksmith. He married a French girl and had three children, two daughters and a son.

Today no one of his descendants carry the name Kemmler anymore. I’m a descendant of his oldest daughter. Although I don’t carry the name Kemmler anymore, I’m quite tight with my German roots.

Roots, which I could find thanks to Ruediger Kemmler. His important research work which he distributed via his website or per email, connects us. I greet him and thank him very much.



## **Johann Heinrich Schall (\*29.7.1815) – 1889**

*By Barbara (Schall) Young*

### **OHIO MEMORIES**

My ancestors settled in Northwest Ohio. The early families settled around the Great Black Swamp - a grim place with Indians and various animals. They became early settlers in Henry County and into the town of Liberty Center.

I have many happy memories of staying with my Grandma Schall. Liberty Center was and still is an all American small country town. I was presented with a Bible by my Great Grandfather Amos Addison Ward, on my first birthday. My Grandpa Schall died when I was only three.

My memories are of grandma. My sister, Carolyn, and I often spent time in the Summer at grandma's. Our parents would put us on a train in Toledo and grandma would meet us in Liberty Center.

She lived in a brick home with a long porch. She had a great vegetable garden and prize dahlias. There was an apple tree, cherry tree (for pies) and grape vines. Grandma cooked and baked on a wood burning stove. She made home made noodles and sweet sugar pie.

I am a professional artist - a painter - and grandma taught me crafts, showed us quilting and weaving. One

of my greatest treasures is a landscape she did at 16. I also have her palette.

My sister and I loved sleeping on grandma's feather beds. These were happy childhood memories.

## **Johann Georg Schettler (\*10.3.1815) – 1832**

*By Jean Coy Bartholomew, Upland, California*

Greetings from a member of the Johann Adam Schettler (Shetler) family:

It has been a wonderful experience to correspond with Ruediger Kemmler. I happened to possess some letters written to my great great-grandfather, George Shetler. The letters were written in German so the contents were unknown to me as I know no German. Ruediger has been so kind to relate the contents of these letters to my second cousin, Ed Stoltz and to me. Through the letters the Shetler family has become more familiar and I have grown to appreciate their intelligence and their stamina overcoming the hard times they experienced in Germany and the United States.

I was born on the farm of my great-grandparents, Solomon and Harriet (McLaughlin) Shetler in Fulton County, Ohio. Although I never had the experience of actually knowing them, as they had died before I was born, I grew up hearing about them from my grandmother, Inez Shetler Borton, my mother, Mildred Borton Coy, my aunt, Lorene Borton Wise and my second cousin, Ed (Darrel) Stoltz (our Shetler family genealogist). I descend from many generations of farmers and spent my years in Ohio growing up on a farm. Among the few possessions I had, which were

owned by the Shetler families, I have given the Solomon Shetler Bible and a chopper made by George Shetler (a blacksmith) to my son, Layne who treasures them.

California is now my home. I moved here in 1962 after receiving my degree in education from Kent State University. After teaching in elementary schools in Covina and Upland for 26 years, I am retired. My husband, Allyn, (also a retired teacher) and I have lived in Upland, a city of approximately 70,000 people, for almost forty years. We are the parents of two children: Layne Allyn and his wife Elizabeth (Beers) Bartholomew and Dina Lorene and her husband, Sean Buur. We also have two wonderful grandchildren, Hally Elizabeth Bartholomew, age 7, and Connor Robert Bartholomew, age 4. Layne is a lawyer, Beth, a middle school vice-principal, Dina, a middle school English teacher and Sean, a publisher. Our entire family lives within a few miles of us so we see each other often. My mother, Mildred Borton Coy lives in a nursing home in Montpelier, Ohio and celebrated her 90th birthday this past April. I also have a brother, Robert Coy, who lives in Jackson, Michigan.

It has been such a pleasure to learn more about the home area in Germany of my great great great-grandfather, Johann Adam Schettler and his son, my great great-grandfather, George Schetter through

Ruediger's web site. Even though we are many miles apart, I feel a kinship with the people there, knowing that my ancestors once lived among their ancestors.

Sincerely,

*By Edwin D. Stoltz, Peoria, Arizona, USA*

It is with the warmest regards that I send this letter of greeting to the Historical Society of Kusterdingen, to the Mayor of Kusterdingen, to Herr Rüdiger Kemmler and to my many cousins in Germany.

Two of my close family ancestors came to the United States of America from Germany. One was David Stolz who came in 1817 from Mähringen, Württemberg, Germany. The spelling of the name Stolz was changed to Stoltz by some of the David Stolz children. The second emigrant was Johann Georg Schettler who came from Wankheim, Tübingen, Baden-Württemberg, Germany, in 1832. He traveled with an aunt arriving in New York City after 60 days on the ocean.

Johann Georg Schettler, known as George Shetler in America, was by trade a blacksmith, as was his father Johann Adam Schettler. George worked at his blacksmithing trade as far west as Chicago before settling in northwest part of the State of Ohio in 1848.

In addition to blacksmithing George Shetler was a prosperous farmer, accumulating acreage in northwestern part of the State of Ohio. His wealth was such that he provided each of his eight adult children with 80 acres of land or an equivalent amount in monies.

My father's mother was a descendant of George Shetler and when a child I lived on a 40 acre Shetler property that my grandmother inherited. Many years later my wife and I purchased and resided on the Ohio farm that George Shetler settled in 1848.

In the early years my Schettler family ancestors in America were farmers. As the years passed the many descendants of George Shetler were employed in various fields of endeavor. Of my immediate cousins they are employed as farmers, educators, engineers and in computer sciences. My own occupation was as a pilot in the air force for nearly 26 years before returning to the Shetler farm in Ohio.

The Schettler and Stolz family descendants are proud of their German ancestry that dates back over 170 years in American history. And they are equally proud of the part there German ancestors had in forming the United States of today.

A special thanks to Mr. Rüdiger Kemmler, for he has provided information on my Schettler family line in Germany that dates back to 1652.

I wish all a very happy, healthy and productive life.

## **Johann Friedrich Walker (\*23.08.1851) – 1872**

*By Charles Frederick Walker, Hartford City, Indiana*

I am Charles Frederick Walker, grandson of John Frederick Walker who came from Germany to America in 1872 at age 21 years of age.

We knew we had relatives in Germany, but had no contact for many years. Our oldest daughter, Brenda, was into genealogy and through Gena Schantz, a cousin in Iowa, made contact with a cousin, Ruediger Kemmler, in Germany. After several e-mails, Ruediger came to visit some of his relatives in Indiana. This was in June 2002. We had a wonderful visit with Ruediger and over 50 of his American relatives.

We were invited to visit our relatives in Germany. In August 2002 my brother Lawrence, my wife Betty and I visited Germany for ten days. We were a little reluctant at first not knowing our relatives but was very impressed with Ruediger. We had to do a little coaxing of brother Lawrence to go with us, but it was the most wonderful vacation we ever had! Our German relatives were just super, super, wonderful people. Ruediger, his wife Dorothee, son Florian, parents Emil and Marianna treated us royally.

Then we stay for about a week with the Wilma Walker

Hipp family. Wilma's grandfather was a brother to our grandfather. Wilma's husband Oswald, daughter Gerda, son-in-law Erich and grandson Martin also treated us royally.

Germany is a beautiful country. Things are so much closer than in the States. We were really impressed with how well the homes were maintained and to see the homes where our Grandfather and Grandmother were raised. We were also honored to be able to attend church where our Grandfather Fred was baptized and confirmed. It was all a little emotional.

All in all it was a wonderful vacation and a wonderful experience to meet and visit with our relatives in beautiful Germany.

*By Lawrence Eugene Walker , Evansville,  
Indiana*

I'm Lawrence Walker, grandson of John Frederick Walker of Wankheim, Germany. In August 2002 along with my brother Charles and his lovely wife Betty we went to Germany to meet cousins for the very first time. I had the most wonderful time of my life even though my brother Charles and his daughter Brenda had to talk me into going!

Germany is such a beautiful country! I never saw so many beautiful flowers and homes so beautifully kept. I guess the one thing that stuck with me most was seeing the home my grandfather was raised in. I was surprised that the home was still standing and in such immaculate condition! Another memory that will stay with me is we got to worship in the Lutheran church where my Grandfather was baptized and confirmed!

I might also state that I enjoyed drinking Schnapps with Oswald Hipp of Wannweil. I just wish we could have communicated better! His grandson, Martin Hipp-Gruner was a big help!

Our cousins Wilma Walker Hipp along with her husband Oswald, daughter Gerda, son-in-law Erich and grandson Martin, Ruediger Kemmler and his wife Dorothee and son Florian treated us royally. When we met cousin Wilma the first thing she said was that I



was a Walker for sure. She told me I looked like her Grandfather (my great Uncle) Ludwig Walker.

We had always thought that my grandfather Fred and my great Uncle Jacob were the first family that immigrated to the United States. What a surprise it was to us when Ruediger Kemmler of Munich told us he had located Walker cousins in Ohio. My niece, Brenda Walker Kearns (the daughter of my brother Charles) and her husband John and I went to Ohio in October of 2004 to meet these new found relatives! During our visit we realized we had a lot in common, they also came from a line of farmers and are faithful in the Lutheran faith. Ohio is only about 100 miles from us in Indiana so you can see how surprised we were to hear about them. I don't recall ever hearing my parents say anything about having relatives in Ohio.

I'm glad my brother Charles and niece Brenda talked me into taking the trip to Germany. I shall never forget this trip and the wonderful cousins who took us into their homes and lives! I'm looking forward to a return visit to see them all again!

*By Brenda Walker Kearns, Muncie, Indiana*

Dear Family and Friends:

In 1872 my Great-Grandfather, Johann Frederick Walker, emigrated from Wankheim, Württemberg, Germany, to America. In America he was known as Fred Walker. He married Maria Agnes "Mary" Walker, also from Württemberg, Germany, and the daughter of Casper Calvin Walker and Anna Margaret "Mary" Schwarzkopf. It is our understanding that Great-Grandpa Fred came to America, because there was a Revolution going on in Germany and his parents did not want him to fight. Great-Grandpa Fred was 21 years old when he came to America. His first stop was in Bucyrus, Ohio, where we suspect he was staying with his Uncle Johann George Walker, who had immigrated to America in 1849. We're not quite certain why he settled in Hartford City, Indiana, USA, but most of his descendants still live in Hartford City area today.

Great-Grandpa Fred was a farmer and father of 8 children; 5 sons and 3 daughters. All of Fred's sons farmed and his daughters married into farm families. Fred's and Mary's fifth child, William Walker, was my grandfather. My father, Charles Walker, was born in the house, my grandfather built in 1913 and still resides on the homestead today.

A few years after Great-Grandpa Fred arrived in

America his brother Jacob came over and also farmed. Jacob built a house just down the road from his brother Fred. Jacob Walker's farm was later purchased by my Dad's brother, Lloyd Walker. The farms are beside each other and they worked the ground together as a team. Today Fred's great-grandson (also named Fred) continues to farm the ground and raise cattle.

Fred continues to be a popular name in my direct line. It is either a first or middle name of all the males. We soon will be welcoming a new male baby Walker in December, 2005 and are anxiously waiting to hear if he will carry on Fred's name!

When Great-Grandpa Fred came to America he brought his Lutheran heritage with him. I'm sure Frederick's loving family and faith in God helped him make his long and lonely journey to the "home of the land and of the free" more bearable! Today the Walker's remain strong in the Lutheran faith!

In 2002 I came in contact and was fortunate to meet Ruediger Kemmler, of Munich. What a surprise for us when Ruediger found my Dad's 2nd cousin, still living in Wannweil. In the fall of 2002 my 80 years old Father along with my Mother and my Dad's brother, Lawrence, went to Wannweil and Wankheim, to meet their cousins and families for the very first time! My husband and I were able to meet them two years later

and then this past summer they came to visit us in the USA.

Great-Grandpa Fred hoped and dreamed, someday he would be able to return to Germany for a visit, but it never came to be. His children said the same thing and I think Great-Grandpa Fred was smiling down on us from heaven that we were able to visit his homeland!

I never knew just how much my life had been and continues to be influenced by my German heritage until I made the trip to Germany myself!

**Johann Jacob Walker (\*04.02.1859) – 1873**

*By Gena, Kerry, and Dean Schantz,  
Davenport, Iowa*

To all the wonderful people of my Great Grandfather's  
homeland,

Kerry, Dean and I send our greetings and best wishes.

We were happy to see that so, much of the past yet  
remains in tangible form – the Church, the family  
home, the barns, and especially the Church and civil  
records. Visiting those places where our ancestors  
lived and worked was an exciting, connecting  
experience for Kerry and me and we hope that each  
one of you may have similar experiences in  
reconnecting to those who have gone before us, to  
those who have left, and to those who may return.

# Memories

## A Brief Statement of My Transit History of Life

I, George Shetler, a citizen of German township, Fulton County, State of Ohio, U.S. of America, was born in Europe, Empire of Germany, Kingdom of Wuerttemberg, Oberamt Tuebingen, in the village of Wankheim, March 10, 1815.

I received a common school education from the age of six years old to fourteen. At the end of school I was catechized and formally admitted into the church of the Lutheran faith which was the standard of religious faith of that part of the country. I received an offer of higher school education, tuition and board free, but father would not spare me helping him at blacksmithing.

At the age of seventeen I left home and country with an aunt<sup>1</sup> and her husband and other families for American in the year of 1832. We took a ship from the city of Rotterdam, Holland and were 60 days on the ocean, landing in New York City. From there I was wandering in various parts of the United States working at my trade of blacksmithing. While working at Shelby, Richland County, Ohio, through the summer of 1842. I formed the acquaintance of Miss Sarah Collins.

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<sup>1</sup> The aunt is very likely Katharina Goelz, born Jul 25, 1807 and married to Wilhelm Wandel, born Feb 9, 1808 in Kusterdingen. Both emigrated in 1832 together with her son Johannes..

Her and I concluded to write our Destiny of Life together. On November 18th we were married of the same year and settled down on a small home two miles east of Shelby. In 1848 we moved here to Fulton County, Ohio, in the woods on the same farm that Milt C. Shetler lives on.

Archbold, Fulton Co., Ohio, March 16th, 1900.



## Schwartzkopf - Long Reunion

This reunion is made up of the descendants, friends and relatives of John and Barbara (Myers) Schwartzkopf who were both born and raised in Germany. John and his brother Jacob were keeping company with the Myers sisters, Barbara and Elizabeth. Jacob and Elizabeth were married while in Germany and were the parents of one child, a little girl about 2 years old, when Jacob and John decided to come to the United States which was known as "The Land of Promise". So the two brothers set out on their voyage reaching the United States and settling near Bucyrus, Ohio, where the Long family was then living. This was the grandfather of Adam, Lizzie and Agnes Long and an uncle of Barbara Myers Schwartzkopf. He was a brother of Barbara Myers mother, Jacob Schwartzkopf, who had been married while still in Germany, purchased a farm in the neighborhood of the Longs and John rented a farm near. After raising a crop they sent for the women, Elizabeth, Jacob's wife and Barbara, John's fiancée. Their voyage was darkened by sorrow. Elizabeth, Jacobs's wife, had made their little girl a new dress to meet her daddy in. She had worn the dress one day while still at sea and was very happy all day thinking of seeing her father soon, but that night she became very ill and died before daybreak. As was the custom then, she was wrapped in a sheet and lowered

to the ocean.

In those days an ocean voyage was very different from a trip now in our "Floating Hotels" with all conveniences and reasonable safety. They traveled in a small sailboat whipped about with the waves, often bailing out the water. It took plenty of courage to attempt such a trip then.

After the women reached their destination Barbara, the single one, found employment as a housemaid and John lived with his married brother Jacob and his wife. In a few months John and Barbara were also married and lived for nearly four years on John's rented farm. During this time three children were born to them, Mary, John and Barbara. Mary, now Mary Adams, (her daughter Cora Adams Messler and her granddaughter Hazel Messler) is the only member of the original family still living. She is past 81 years of age and enjoys remarkable good health and vitality.

When Mary was three years of age her parents sold all of their possessions except bedding and cooking utensils and started for Indiana in a covered wagon. It was a long tedious journey, it being in March and the weather cold and blustery, and only having mud and corduroy roads, including swamps. It took them fourteen days to travel from Bucyrus, Ohio to Blackford County.

A few nights were spent at farm homes along the way but most of the time they slept in the covered wagon.

When the weather was too bad the children were kept in bed day and night.

They took with them bologna and cheese and a boiler of home made bread, buying milk along the way.

They stopped at the John Wentz home east of Hartford City, staying three or four days with this family until they rented a farm near by. This was their first Blackford County home. The house made of logs, had one room with a slab floor (that is thick planks chopped from trees with an ax, rough and splintery), a clapboard door and roof and one small window. They had no stove, just an open fireplace. She baked bread for the family in a large iron Dutch oven with a heavy iron lid, much like our small Dutch ovens of today. To do this she would get a large bed of good hard wood coals, set the iron oven on them and cover coals over the top, leaving it the required time and her bread was baked.

They did not buy much furniture for the home, just one bed, a trundle bed (which can be pushed under the large bed to save floor space), a table and six kitchen chairs. Their dishes consisted of just one plate, one cup and saucer for each member of the family and a few deep dishes. Their cooking utensils were iron pots

and skillets, tin pans, flat milk crocks and wooden water buckets and tubs. Their broom was a stick of wood whittled into a bunch of shavens at the bottom. They never owned a rocking chair until after Mary was married.

They remained on this farm until a couple of crops were raised then bought 40 acres of land near the Wadel School. This was just before the Civil War broke out. Grandfather also bought a half interest in Henry Yeager's shoe shop in Hartford City and moved his family in town, which was very small at that time. He kept the farm and planted it mostly in wheat.

In this age every child was put to work when they were what we would call babies. Mother was 5 years of age when her parents would go to the farm to harvest the grain leaving her to care for three younger children all day long.

After the war was over they returned to the farm but soon sold it for a good price. Grandfather invested part of this in what is known as the Walker farm. This was still in the wild stage with woods and swamps and sometimes a bear, panther or a wolf came to visit the pigpen, sheep shed or chickens. After building a log house and barn and clearing most of the ground he again sold out and this time bought 100 acres where the old John Schwartzkopf home now stands.

There were now seven living children and one dead. Mary, the oldest was fourteen years of age. With the exception of about 15 acres this farm was in woods, undergrowth, swamps and mosquitoes but had a good well of water and a log house with one large room and a low attic room above. This same room is still the main part of the old home where Glen Schwartzkopf now lives. This room was used as kitchen, living room and bedroom. The up stairs was used for storage of food and seeds. Later the older children slept in one end of the upper room often running a snake (or what not) out of the bed before climbing in for the night. In the winter they woke up to find their bed covered with snow. Lewis, the youngest child, was born on this place. This was a fine house; it boasted two doors with glass panes, three windows and a good floor. After mother married it was divided into two rooms and other rooms were added later.

Each Sunday afternoon the children were asked to sit quietly while Grandmother opened the family bible to read and teach them. Mother had very little schooling being the oldest child; she had to help with the family cooking. She made bread for the family when only 9 years old. At the age of 6 or 7 her work was to care for the children, wash the dishes, knit suspenders until 0 o'clock each winter evening, help her mother reel yarn and keep the home supplied with candles. These were

made at home by melting and molding the tallow, placing the wick in the center. In planting time she dropped corn and potatoes for her father in the field. They had no machinery in those days to make the work lighter but had to do everything by hand. Mother often smiles as she remembers their telling of Grandfathers first corn. He cut it by hand and laid each stalk on the ground, then went back over the field to gather it up and shock it, however, he soon learned better. All corn was dropped by hand and covered with a hoe. The children dropped corn from morning until night, day after day, until it was all finished. Blading of the sugar cane was another job for the children. The adults would cut and pile the stalks then the children worked around the pile, tearing the blades off and getting it ready for the sorghum mill.

Thrashing time was also quite different from that of our modern day. For buckwheat a rail pen was laid up and covered with rails, the buckwheat laid on top and beat with clubs until the grain fell through the cracks. To thrash wheat, oats and rye would select a spot of ground clean of all grass and weeds and sweep it, then lay the grain around this ground in a large circle and drive teams of horses round and round until the grain was trampled loose. Little boys rode and drove the teams and father walked near with a scoop shovel to catch the droppings from the horses, then the grain

was scooped up and run through a hand turned windmill to clean it of dirt and chaff. All grain was cradled and bound by hand and all hay cut with a common scythe and gathered with a pitchfork.

Their entertainment's, churches and schools were just as different as their crop methods. When company came to spend the evening the men of the house either made or mended shoes, and the women and girls knit as they talked, ate apples and drank cider. When young boys and girls went out together they walked if under 6 or 7 miles and were extremely lucky if they could go on horse back or in a big wagon. Their pleasures consisted of going to church or gathering in homes for a spelling bee, neighborhood apple peeling party, butchering or thrashing.

Their church was a log schoolhouse in the winter and in summer the open woodland, with planks laid across logs for seats. They went to church in calico and overalls and barefooted. The schoolroom was very plain. A rough table and straight-backed chair answered for the teacher's desk. There was a blackboard and lumps of chalk. They used a cloth to clean the board. The desks were made of a plank with a slanting hole bored in each corner and a wood leg stuck in each hole. The seats are made in the same manner only smaller.

After all, when we stop to think and compare our

modern conveniences and luxuries, our warm homes, good highways, radios, means of transportation, wonderful churches, schools and libraries we should be more happy and contented than the most of us are.

(Signed by) Cola Adams Messler (This was written in the real 1938)

## **Story of Maria Barbara Gutbrod, born March 23, 1870 in Kusterdingen**

*By Betty Dunn*

This is Maria Barbara Gutbrodt Learned's story. It is a true story. I am her granddaughter. I am telling her story from memories she told her daughter (my aunt), Angeline Friederika, and information gleaned from a microfilm of church records dating back to the year 1556.

The year is now 1994 but we must start over 124 years ago in a small rural hamlet in Germany's southern state of Wuerttemberg. In the spring of 1870, a baby girl was born March 22 to Johann Martin Gutbrodt and his wife Friederika Friesch in the small village of Kusterdingen located a short distance east of Tuebingen.

Two days later the baby was named and christened Maria Barbara in the church where her father was the sexton. She was the fourth child to be born to the couple since their marriage six years earlier in November of 1864.

The roll of church microfilm reveals only tragedy over the next three weeks in the Gutbrodt home. Four days after Maria Barbara's birth the Gutbrodts' 16-month-old son named after his father dies of diphtheria. Another four days later the Gutbrodts' youngest daughter

Agnes, who has just turned three years, dies of diphtheria. On April 8, their oldest daughter Friederika, who is five years, dies of diphtheria. The baby Maria Barbara, less than a month old, lives.

Decades later, Maria Barbara, who herself would lose three infant sons, told of how she, during her childhood, often watched her mother climb the hill from their home to the graveyard to sit alone at the graves of her three children. "One cannot fathom the loss of a child," my grandmother told my aunt.

Over the next ten years three more living children and another who died shortly after birth would be born to Johann Martin and Friederika. A son was born November 12, 1872 to be named after his father. A daughter, named after her mother, was born April 19, 1874 and another daughter, Marie Agnes, was born October 18, 1880.

Maria Barbara's childhood memories are of playing with her brother, made to do errands with him, and that the family was poor, very very poor. They often ate bread and milk for supper. There was no oven in which to bake bread in their home. This was apparently the case with many. Maria Barbara and her brother Johann Martin carried the leavened dough into the village square to the bakery. Here, a plug with a family mark on it was inserted into the bottom of the loaf as it was placed in the large oven with that of

other families so that it could be later identified. Traveling from one place to the other was not measured in miles but by the time it took to walk somewhere. So we can assume the family had no horse and cart with which to travel.

Another of the sister-brother chores was to go in the evenings to the goose feeding grounds and collect the down feathers from among the goose droppings. Those who were fortunate enough to own geese grazed them on the grassy hillsides herding their flocks home each night. These precious feathers were made into pillows and down mattresses.

The village of Kusterdingen is not far from the southern border of Germany and Switzerland. Later, in her homesickness, she would remember the view she had of the snow capped Alps<sup>2</sup>. Her homesickness also appeared in her dreams. She repeatedly dreamed of approaching the door of her childhood home. When she reached and touched the knob to open the door she always awoke from her dream.

Maria Barbara, as a child of thirteen, probably was too young to have thought or dreamed of going to America. As the church bells tolled out the New Year of 1884 and her approaching fourteenth birthday in

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<sup>2</sup> *It's very likely that she has meant a smaller mountain area called „Schwaebische Alb“, which is about 20 km away from Kusterdingen as the real Alps can't be seen from there..*

March, the world was about to change for this blonde blue-eyed maedchen.

A family friend – a Johann George Goetz – had emigrated to America years earlier and was visiting back in his homeland. His daughter, Magdalena, was married to Maria Barbara's father's brother, Johann George Gutbrodt, who had also emigrated to America where he Americanized his name to Goodbrod. Magdalena and her husband George, living at Utica, Nebraska had several small children and were expecting another.

Maria Barbara's parents were approached by Goetz. "Why not give the young girl an opportunity to go to America with him to help his daughter in the household with her children," Goetz probably said to them, agreeing to pay her passage.

What a decision it must have been. Was it the opportunity they must have considered, or perhaps the difficulty in providing for all the children? Did Maria Barbara even have a say in whether or not she journeyed to America?

The decision to let Maria Barbara go was made. She was to be confirmed in the church in April, but this was January, probably late January. It is apparent, again from the roll of microfilm of the church records, that there was a rush to get her off on her journey with



Goetz. There is a half page record of a special confirmation service held just for her at the Kusterdingen church.

The record states in part that the confirmation was held on February 4, 1884 indicating she is to accompany Goetz to North America leaving on February 8, for Bremen, where they are to depart on February 11 for Utica, Seward County, State of Nebraska (near Lincoln City) to reside with Joh. Georg Gutbrodt.

A search of the Port of New York passenger lists finds Maria Barbara arriving on the vessel "Rhein" on March 3, 1884. A Georg Goetz, identified as a farmer, is listed immediately above her name which he has Americanized to Barbara Goodbrod.

Grandmother often told my aunt about her voyage, particularly the night the ship struck an iceberg while they slept. Six hundred and seventy-five people including crew were aboard according to the ship captain's passenger list. Maria Barbara was in a steerage passenger room with a group of women. They were all flung from their bunks. Bells clanged. Everyone was ordered on deck and a crew member grabbed the young girl fastening a life jacket on her. Crying, alone, frightened – she was pushed and shoved until, almost miraculously Goetz found her on deck. Fortunately the boat was not seriously damaged.

Goetz and my grandmother probably traveled by train to the town of Milford near Lincoln where Goetz farmed. Unable to speak a word of English, grandmother later remembers what happened. They were apparently to go on to Utica, not far away, the next day, but that evening a man on a horse came riding in across the grassland. He had a telegram for Goetz. His daughter, Magdalena, for whom Maria Barbara had been brought all this way to help with her children, had died during childbirth.

Magdalena's husband, who, as mentioned earlier was my grandmother's father's brother, had dispersed the previously born children among others. He had no need for Maria Barbara. What to do with her?

Maria Barbara's father also had a sister<sup>3</sup> who had emigrated from Germany and lived at Marysville, Kansas. It was decided that the girl would be sent alone by train to live with her aunt.

Goetz put my grandmother on the train at Milford en route to Beatrice for an overnight stay when she was to board another train on to Marysville. She was outfitted in an oversize hat belonging to the dead Magdalena by which her aunt would recognize the girl. Speaking and understanding no English Maria Barbara was given a letter addressed to an innkeeper in Beatrice. Goetz, as

<sup>3</sup>.After some research we believe that it was Magdalena Gutbrod, married to Jacob Grauer in Marysville, KS

he put the girl on the train at Milford, spoke at length with the conductor probably giving him instructions.

The train puffed out of the station. At each small town stop, Maria Barbara jumped up, her carpet bag in hand, waving the letter she clutched in her other hand. At the same time she tried to keep the oversize hat from sliding off her small head. The conductor would shake his head 'no' each time until they reached Beatrice. Here the conductor helped the girl off the train. She stood abandoned until the station master found her alone on the platform. Realizing the girl spoke only German he went across the street from the station to the inn and brought someone back who could speak her language. The proprietor took the girl in hand. She was fed a supper and put to bed, to be awakened early the next morning, given breakfast and taken to the train station for the trip on to Marysville.

Again, the conductor was informed. But at each stop, Maria Barbara, frightened beyond comprehension, again jumped up waving the envelope in her hand to be greeted with a shaking of the conductor's head until the train pulled into Marysville. The conductor escorted her off the train, where she joined a crowd of travelers coming and going on the platform. As the train left the station continuing its route, Maria Barbara was left by the crowd to stand alone looking strange in the oversize hat, her carpet bag in hand and still clutching

the envelope which had been her right of passage. No one in the crowd had recognized the hat. She began to cry thinking she was lost to the world.

Finally, from behind her, a woman sitting in a one horse buggy called out, "Are you Barbara?" (The Maria had been dropped.) One can only imagine little Barbara's relief. I'm not sure of this woman's given name, but her married surname was Grauer, whose family, according to the microfilm of church records was a 16th century name in the church register.

I do not know how long Barbara, as she now became called, lived at Marysville with her aunt, but apparently it was not a pleasant stay. As time passed Barbara was sent to Illinois to live with another aunt, although I think this may have been a cousin, named Regina Gutbrodt Ruppert (Rupert). She liked this woman, but was allowed to only stay a short time before returning to Marysville.

Eventually, Barbara went to Utica, Nebraska where Johann George Goodbrod at Utica, remarried and gathered up his children, bringing Barbara into his home to help in the household as originally had been planned. (He married Barbara's cousin, her mother's sister's daughter also named Magdalena, who had been sent to America in hopes of relieving Barbara's homesickness.)

Five years after my grandmother's arrival in the United States, she was married to my grandfather, Lucian George Learned, on May 2, 1889 at Utica. My grandfather was of Puritan ancestry on both, his father and mother's lineage, the families arriving in Massachusetts in the 1630s on several of the Winthrop's Fleet voyages. His mother's lineage goes back to the 11th century with the surname of Boynton of the family's Boynton Castle heritage located in Yorkshire.

Lucian and Barbara's first two children, Martin and Walter, both died as infants and were buried a few blocks away in the Utica Cemetery. Oscar was born in 1894 and lived until September 1925 when he was killed in an accident at work in the Havlock Railroad Shops at Lincoln. A son, Willie, was born and died of a head injury at about two years. Warren was born in 1900; my mother, Mabel was born in 1902; my aunt, Angeline Friederika was born in 1907, and an uncle, Russell, was born in 1910.

So, it was that Barbara came to know her own mother's agony at the loss of children. She too had only a short walk to sit at the graves of her dead sons. My grandparents both now rest beside them.

Thanks to that roll of microfilm covering four centuries of Kusterdingen church records, I have been able to trace my grandmother's ancestry back on her mother's

side to the beginning of the church in that community. The Friesch surname appears in 1561, the record begins in 1554. I have been able to establish my grandmother's mother's lineage to her (my grandmother) great great-grandfather Johan Jacob Friesch, born at Kusterdingen about 1725, whose son Johan Jacob Frisch was born January 25, 1757 and whose son Johan George Frisch born September 26, 1800 was Barbara's mother's father.

The Gutbrodt name first appears two centuries later than that of Friesch when a son, Johan Martin Gutbrodt, is born to a George Gutbrodt (probably Johan George), on December 26, 1755. This son was my grandmother's great great-grandfather and my great great great great-grandfather.

My grandmother, upon leaving Germany, never again saw her parents, or her brother, or either of her sisters. After she married and the children were born, my grandparents wrote and asked if Barbara's younger sister could come to America and help in their household. Her parents said no, because they felt they would never again see their daughter and did not want to let another child go.

My grandmother's father often sent flower seeds from his German garden. I wonder if that is where the beautiful hollyhocks in grandmother's Utica garden came from.

This is Maria Barbara's story.

## Memories of Peter Grauer<sup>4</sup>, Marcus, Iowa

My mother died in 1912. At her funeral the undertaker was Louie Nelson. He still used horses to draw the hearse. There were about 12 horses drawn buggies at the funeral and about the same number of automobiles. The cars left first and then waited at Trinity Lutheran Church for the horse drawn vehicles to arrive. My father was not used to cars and did not much care for them. He said it made him uneasy to ride in some of those early automobiles. He did not feel that he was in control because there was no tongue out in front to which horses could be hitched. Horses did not seem to like the new “contraptions”, any better than he did. Many horses would take to the ditch and even go through a fence when they met an automobile, in fact I got my ankle sprained one time when the horses became frightened by an approaching automobile and our buggy was upset in the ditch. The tongue was splintered so badly as to be useless. I used it to make my first “real flying kite”, and Boy, did it ever go high. It went up so high that it took all the slack in the string. I would send pieces of paper upon the string and could feel the jolt as the circle of paper would hit the kite.

I was married to Arta Paffle at Trinity Lutheran Church south of Marcus on August 17, 1921. We went to

<sup>4</sup> son of Christof Grauer (born 16.10.1851 in Jettenburg)

LeMars for the reception. It was held at the home of her parents, Mr. & Mrs. Al Paffle. Then we went on to Jefferson, Iowa spent a few days, we also took in the State Fair at Des Moines. There I saw Captain Briggs of Headquarters Company and many of my old army buddies. Most of them were from Minneapolis, Minnesota. When we came home from our wedding trip, we started up house keeping on the farm where I still live, 60 years later. My brother, Lou and his wife, Mabel moved to Marcus. He had farmed 80 acres for a while; they decided to go into a grocery store.

Arta and I began a slow upward climb from the roaring twenties to the dust bowl of the thirties; there were times when we really had to tighten our belts.

In 1923 we began building a new Trinity Lutheran Church. It was made of brick and was to be a monument to the Glory of God for letting World War I come to an end. The first Sunday after the Armistice was signed, Henry Specht pledged \$ 1000 to start off a building fund. We moved the old church to the north, side of the lot, and began digging a basement. We used horses hitched to scrapers. We had to set off same sticks of dynamite to loosen the frozen ground to enable us to scrape it out. After we had finished the basement, we began to work with a contractor. Material such as brick, cement and stone came to Marcus by railroad. A committee of three men, Adam

Grauer, Gerhart Hesse and Carl Doer kept track of when it would arrive and then let the farmers know as when they could come and haul it out to the building site.

The weather seemed "spotty" and changeable. It might rain hard all night so we would decide to go get the supplies while it was too wet for farm work. After eating dinner in Marcus we would start out for the church with our loads, and see the farmers around town working in the fields. We had to unload the brick at the church yard before we could go home and attend to our chores and other necessary jobs. Very often, it would rain again during the night making it impossible to get into the fields. The weeds just kept on growing. The brick and cement usually came in on time, but one time the stone failed to come so the contractor was obliged to stop work for a week. There was a "straw boss" and a mechanic who were supposed to look after things. One evening when I came in from the fields, Arta told me that the stone for the church had come. They wanted it hauled out as soon as possible. My team of horses had worked all day and were tired, so I unhitched them and took their harnesses off, after they had been attended to, I had chores to do. Then I got another team ready and started for Marcus shortly before sundown. I had plenty of help to load the stone on the wagon from the

railroad car, but by that time the sun was down and it was getting dark. There were two Model T trucks also being loaded and of course they were able to make better time. It was about 9:30 when I left Marcus that evening with a team of horses and a lumber wagon and a load of stone. I got to the church about 11:30 that night. The moon was quite bright but there was no other light and there was no one around to help me unload. It was late and I was tired after a full day's work in the field. I sat there in the pale moon light and wondered just what I could do. Then I heard the dull rumble of a truck coming down the gravel road which is now known as C 38. I watched its lights as it came to Simson Bethel Corner, where the four way stop is now. There it slowed down and turned west. It stopped near me and sure enough, it was the Straw Boss and his mechanic. I stood up and said, "I am surely glad to see you men, where do you want this load of stone?" They said, "Just leave it set until morning, we will unload it when it is daylight". "Nothing doing," I said, "I will cultivating corn in the morning". So we all pitched in and helped, and the stone was unloaded that night. I felt that I had one over on Paul Revere. He left Boston Church at midnight on a saddled horse to spread the alarm to the country side. I left Trinity Church after midnight in a lumber wagon and two weary horses. I got home about 1:30 the next morning. The truck that came to my rescue that night had no cab or

windshield. The seat was a rough board with only sacks to sit on, and a 12 inch plank on either side. There also was no end gate. But the roar of that antique truck was sweeter than any music to my ears on that most eventful night. Work on the church progressed through out the spring season. The contractor was questioned about mixing the mortar for the brick on Friday. Then covering it and waiting until the following Monday to finish the job. He claimed it was a new method and would work out fine. Some 10 or 12 years later we wondered about his new method, when it costs us about \$ 8000 to repaint the brick. The building committee at first decided to use the seats from the old church in the new one. Then it was decided to buy new ones but no one had any ideas as to how to pay for them. A meeting was called, one Sunday after church. We met in the parsonage, and one man sad he would donate \$ 600<sup>5</sup> to start off with, then another offered \$ 300<sup>6</sup>, and still another \$ 250<sup>7</sup>. The pastor got a pencil and paper to pass around so we could make our pledges. We had the \$ 2500 needed to put in the new pews in less than 30 minutes. The "\$ 250 I pledged" took 5 years to pay off.

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<sup>5</sup> Adam Grauer

<sup>6</sup> Carl Dorr

<sup>7</sup> Jeity Wilkens





The corner stone of the new church was laid on May 20, 1923. I sang in the choir on a platform when Reverend Ilten was handed a trowel to lift some mortar to put under the stone. Some

soft cement splashed up on his fine pressed suit, but he did not seem to mind it. He said: "Fifty years from now when most of us will be in our graves, this church will still be standing, and someone will still be preaching the Gospel." Reverend Wolfram, great grand father of Michael Wolfram, who is now pastor of Peace Lutheran Church in Marcus, was also on the platform. He was president of Missouri Synod of the whole Iowa District.

After the corner stone was laid, plastering and bricklaying seem to continue at quite a rapid pace. We looked forward to the completion and the dedication with much eagerness. The dedication took place on Sunday, Dec. 16, 1923.

It had cost \$ 3500 and was free of all debt. Many considered Trinity Lutheran Church the most beautiful rural church in the state of Iowa. It was a small church, but had more stones used on it, than many of the larger churches in the east, it made me happy to

realize that I had been responsible for hauling some of those stones, even if one load had been hauled at midnight in a lumber wagon.

The weather was beautiful on that Sunday of the dedication. When we lined up for dinner the line extended from the dining room hallway, through the basement up the stairs and out on to the sidewalk. The doors were wide open. No one felt the need for an overcoat. Adam Dorr<sup>8</sup>, father of Fred Dorr, said: "Jesus fed the five thousand, and is still done today."



One of the most unique features of Trinity was the slanting floor. The seats in the back were much higher than the front pews. This was very unLutheran. The

ascension picture in the alter was given in memory of Mrs. Will (Hilda) Ohlendorf, Eddie's mother.

<sup>8</sup> Lulu Grauer's grandfather

## Story of Aunt Kate<sup>9</sup>

as told by Frances (Gibson) McPherson

I'll tell you what little I know about my grandmother. She was born in Jettenburg, Germany on April 2, 1859. The one thing she remembered most about life there was that as a child of 5 or 6 - she tended the geese while she knit. She was expected to knit a sock a day! At seven years of age the family left Germany (because her folks didn't want the boys to have to join the Kaiser's army). As they crossed the Atlantic in a sailboat, they carefully watched a little cousin who had come with them. Who was he? They even tied him to the mast at times - to keep the active child from falling over-board. The trip took many days. Somehow the number 56 sticks in my mind, but it could be wrong.

The family lived one year in Sheboygan, Wis. - and then moved to Oxford, Iowa area, in 1867. She talked a lot about clearing "the timber" to make a place to plant crops. They had a little house in the "woods" and each day all of the family left to work clearing the timber. Kate and her little brother Adam were left at home. She never forgot how frightened they became as they sat on the doorstep at dusk, waiting for the others to come home. The owls started to hoot and they were

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<sup>9</sup> Maria Katharina Grauer, born March 29, 1859 in Jettenburg

always so glad to hear the family coming home, very tired from their day's work.

We have a cabin in the Santa Cruz Mts., but Grandma never liked to go to the "woods". "Why would anyone want to go there when you have a good house in town?"

A young man named Henry Karsten courted Kate for a couple of years. Rode his horse over every 2 weeks! His family (parents) had come from Northern Germany. The family lived in Chicago, but his parents and their two boys came to Oxford and bought a farm - after the Chicago fire. The farm backed up to the Amana Colony town of Homestead. Henry had a brother, Louis, who was the banker in Oxford for many years.

After Kate and Henry married, they lived with Henry's folks on the farm, where Ida was born on January 14, 1885 and Anna on September 9, 1887. Both learned to speak German before English because their Grandparents lived with them and spoke little English.

A friend of Henry's, Mrs. Alt, taught him telegraphy and some time in 1888 or 1889 they moved to Kansas where my Grandfather (Henry) was a telegrapher for the Rock Island Railway. On May 6, 1889, Pearl was born in either Purcell or Denton, Kansas.

In 1892, they moved to Beatrice, Nebraska, where Henry was again a telegrapher for the Rock Island. He

never had a vacation but the family had a railway pass and every so often, Kate would take the girls for a visit to Iowa.

In December of 1900, the family moved back to the farm in Homestead where Henry was the Homestead telegrapher. In 1906 they sold the farm and moved into town at Oxford (Farm sold to Phil Vogt).

Anna graduated from High school in Oxford in 1905 and Pearl in 1906. Ida had graduated from Beatrice High in 1903 and started to Iowa Wesleyan U. in 1906.

In 1907 they again went back to Beatrice, Nebraska, where Pearl took a business course and later worked in a store there. Henry took a trip out West, looking for a job and a place for the girls to go to college and learn to be teachers. He found San Jose in the beautiful Santa Clara valley. It was a small town and had a teacher's college. He was offered a telegrapher's job with Southern Pacific.

The valley was a mass of orchards. (How we miss them today. The trees are gone and the valley is filled with houses and industry and is known as Silicon Valley!)

The girls all went to college and taught school later. Ida taught in Modesto, California, where she was joined by Pearl a few years later. There Pearl met Nelson Gibson. They married September 2, 1915, and moved to a cattle ranch, that Nelson had bought in

Southeastern California in the Owens Valley. Their daughter, Frances (me), was born on September 11, 1916, back in San Jose because there were no doctors near the ranch at Lone Pine.

Anna met a young man at church, named Harry James, and they were married on November 27, 1913. Their daughters are Margaret, born May 15, 1915 and Ruth, born November 13, 1919.

Ida went to Peru in May of 1919 to be a missionary. While she was gone, Nelson died in the "flu epidemic", and Pearl and Frances moved back to San Jose. Henry Karsten had died of appendicitis on November 1, 1917; so Pearl and Frances moved in with Kate after Nelson's death. Ida returned from Peru and lived with them, beginning in 1923. Pearl taught school in the near-by town of Santa Clara for 29 years, while Ida taught in San Jose.

Anna and Harry were on a prune and apricot ranch for many years (in the Valley). Anna taught school just down the road from the ranch. Their daughters and Frances all went to San Jose State College and received teaching credentials. All three married and as of now Kate and Henry have 14 great-great grandchildren. Kate died in San Jose on October 2, 1942. Her three granddaughters are: Margaret James Serrett, Ruth James Robertson and Frances Gibson McPherson. They remain very close. Holidays are spent together with

their children and grandchildren.

Kate Grauer Karsten was a typical hardworking German lady. She was very friendly and had lots of friends. She was devoted to her family and helped rear Frances after Nelson died.

One year when the Mexican prune pickers quit at Harry's and Anna's ranch, the family pitched in to save the crop, crawling around on hands and knees over the many acres. Kate was in her mid-seventies, but she joined the crew and was one of the best and fastest prune pickers there.

She was a devout Christian and passed on her faith in Christ to her daughters, and they to theirs.

## **“A record of the events experienced during our Journey from Germany to North America in 1854”**

From Pioneer Recollections page 100 – 109

*By Henry Maas<sup>10</sup>*

Everything was in readiness for the journey. In Bremen a contract was drawn up with a transportation company. With tearful eyes and joyful expectations we took leave from home.

Our neighbor took us to Huntebrueck, where we boarded a small steamboat, “Oldenburg”, which took us to Elsfleth. From there we took a larger ship down the Weser to Brake. From there we were to take the larger ship across the ocean. Here we met with a disappointment. When the ship was launched, it tipped over for want of ballast. The transportation Company lodged us in a hotel of Mr. Frinke, until we could proceed on our journey. However, another ship, the “Juno” with Captain Baake, was lying in readiness. Both ship and captain enjoyed a good reputation. It also

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<sup>10</sup> Henry Maas married in 1868 Anna Barbara Walz, born August 13, 1845 in Wannweil as daughter of Martin Walz from Wannweil and Maria Elisabeth Grauer from Jettenburg. After the early death of her husband (1846) Maria Elisabeth emigrated to the U.S. in 1853 with her second husband, Georg Renz, from Stockach and the children (please refer to page 154 of the book „Die Auswanderung auf den Härten“)

contained a large cabin in the forepart and so we decided to go with the "Juno", which was in accord with the conditions of our contract. We were glad to get aboard. The "Juno" was dragged by a towboat to Bremen and we followed on a ferryboat. At Bremen the ship was ready to sail. All the other passengers were already on deck. It was quite windy and many were seasick. Our cabin was toward the front of the ship, beneath the deck near the fluke. The anchor chains were our neighbors. A board wall separated us from the other passengers. No remonstrance would help. The anchor was raised and with the tide our ship drifted slowly toward the North Sea. We saw the wreckage of a ship and some seals. The wind was favorable, the sea heaving and our cabin bobbed up and down and many began to call "New York". Our captain did not sail through the English Channel; but around Scotland. Suddenly we were pursued by a ship. At intervals of 10 minutes we heard two shots and the third time a cannonball whistled close by. Our ship halted. The other ship was an English Man-Of-War. Several officers came aboard, examined our papers, O.K.'d them and we could go on. A few days before Pentecost, we saw another ship back of us. It was a fast sailboat. It passed very near our ship and was loaded with passengers. Calls of "Hurrah" and waving of handkerchiefs went to and for. It was a new ship and according to our estimate, the same ship we were

to take at first. It seemed as though it still had insufficient ballast, because it leaned conspicuously with a slight wind.

The first day of Pentecost we had a severe windstorm. The ship labored intensely and nearly all were seasick. It was nearly impossible to stay in bed. A large wave rolled over the deck and everything seemed afire from lightning. Becka Wichmann was struck by a piece of wood on the head which left quite a wound. Our neighbors were Quakers from Magdeburg and very pious. They sang and prayed very much, but they were averse to peeling potatoes. For this reason they did not get very many in their soup. When the water began to come into the cabin and Becka Wichmann began to call for help, the Quakers made a murderous tumult so that no one could hear a word. The boatswain, J. Springer, had charge of our deck. He entered our cabin with a lantern and commanded "Silence", since he could not make himself heard by his men. All speaking and cursing was of no avail. He examined Miss Wichmann's wound and told us not to fear, left us and locked the hatchway. This closed out the water, but the air became so contaminated, nearly unbearable, but it had a quieting effect on the Quakers. After a while the storm ceased, the hatchway was opened again and all grasped for fresh air. The boatswain returned and told us that the worst was over. He was an efficient seaman

and an acquaintance of my uncle. He served us with kind deeds and advice on our journey.

Several days after the storm we saw another ship, sending S.O.S.-calls with tattered sails. Our pilot with 4 sailors went over in a boat. The sea was high. The little boat was tossed by the waves over hills and valleys of water. When they finally came to the ship they found the entire personal drunk. The captain had lost his course and knew not where he was. It was a Norwegian ship, loaded with wine, coming from France. Our men were rewarded with wine. When we came close to Newfoundland and close to American soil we experienced much fog and finally arrived in New York and cast anchor in the Hudson. Health officers boarded our ship and found everything satisfactory and we received permission to land.

The captain however did not take us to the pier. A small steamboat drew up and offered to take us to the pier for a dollar. This created dissatisfaction. It was a low trick of the captain, for he was obligated to land his passengers. Some paid, others pleaded, because of their large families, but the captain had no sympathy. We refused to pay and remained on board. Our boatswain informed us that the captain had to land us. The next morning the steamboat returned but we remained firm. Our baggage had to be landed, so the custom officials could check up on the same. Now he

threatened to retain the women and children till the \$ 1 would be paid. The pilot threatened to starve us, but the boatswain provided for us. The captain had already gone ashore and when the pilot realized that we would not move, he cried aloud to lower the large boat and to bring us ashore on pier No. 4. After the boat was lowered, we entered and three sailors were to land us. The boat was heavily loaded and when we were about 10 rods from the ship two sailors began to quarrel and fight. With a thundering voice the sailors were ordered aboard. One by the name of J. Brinkmann was ordered on board and received from the boatswain a large sausage, which made him shout for glee. Another sailor was ordered to take his place and now we were landed on pier No. 4. All rejoiced to be able to set foot on firm soil of the promised land, which should offer us a new home.

After some questioning, we found our friend Bulling, who acted as a kind host to us. Here our comrade, Fred Pundt, joined us again. But the goal of our journey was not yet in sight. Iowa bordered on civilization and was part of the Wild West. From New York to Albany, we were to take a ship. Our luggage had been transported to the pier and we followed in Indian file. When we arrived there a general consternation prevailed. The ship had sprung a leak and sank in the water.  $\frac{3}{4}$  ft. of water inside, caused



boxes and trunks to swim. Our companions of the "Juno", who landed sooner than we, were the unfortunate ones. Things were reloaded on another ship, our goods were placed upon the same and we followed. The deck was filled with passengers. Some laughed, others wept.

The passage up the Hudson began. The day was warm, but the nights were cool. After breakfast the next morning, we had to go ashore, because the boat was sinking. We had to walk to the railroad station, but our boat was taken in tow by a steamer and brought to the station. Finally, late in the evening, we boarded a train with comfortable seats and the next forenoon we crossed the Hudson at Albany. Here we had to wait till in the evening for the next train. A German hotel keeper greeted us friendly, offering us his assistance. He said he had a large backyard, where we might make ourselves at home until our train would come offering us dinner at 25c each. We considered this a fair offer and accepted the same. He took us into an enclosed yard, which was filled with passengers. Toward the rear there was a door, but after a while it was closed. Then it was announced that dinner was ready and the train would soon leave. In order to get away, all had to pass through his house. A limited portion of soup was ready on the table. Since we had provisions with us, but few sat down to eat. At the front door, however,

the hotel keeper was stationed, demanding 25c from each and a redheaded Irishman with a club and a gun to enforce this demand. Finally a tumult arose. Some of the guests called for the Police, but by that time he had completed his collection. We had been coaxed into a trap.

Finally our train came and we could proceed on our journey. The next day we arrived in Buffalo. Here we witnessed the celebration of the Fourth of July for the first time. Here we also got a look at our baggage and found everything in order. The next evening, we boarded a steamer and crossed Lake Erie, arriving in Toledo, Ohio. From there we took a train to Chicago, where we remained overnight. The day following we took a train to Rock Island. The road had just been completed and we were perhaps some of the first passengers. At Rock Island, we viewed the Mississippi, the Father of Waters, for the first time. We crossed this stream on a ferry boat, landing in Davenport. Since Iowa was our goal we halted here to look about. We found a hotel near the river. It was very hot and sultry. We could not sleep inside. The landlord was sick with a fever. The next day we found a better lodging place in a higher location with a person named Schmidt. He was a sort of a copper smith by trade and owned a saloon, a small store, and a hardware store. An open place near the house was given us. We could cook our

meals, our baggage was put under roof and we could enjoy privacy.

My father, Onkel Arend, Herman Lange and J.H. Mehrens bought horses and buggy and started together for Iowa City in order to find a home for all that had journeyed together. They arrived where the slaughterhouse is at present near South Amana and lodged with Mr. Faber. He possessed 40 acres of corn, 2 log houses and a barn. They made a deal, paid down some cash. Later they found out that he did not own this property as yet, but matters were settled honestly and fairly. His neighbor, an Irish bachelor, had 80 acres of land, a log house and 10 acres of corn. This was bought for \$ 4.00 an acre. Government land was also to be had in this vicinity.

During their absence Gerd Maas, John Grummer and F. Pundt went and hired out on the harvest fields. I remained with the women and the children as overseer of the camp. It was intensely sultry and a cyclone swept over the city, causing much damage. We remained unharmed. After the storm our host, D. Maas and myself drove to view the ruins. The road was blocked with wood, stones and fallen trees. Two large brick stores collapsed. Dead and dying were lying in the cellar. Near the river we saw the upper part of steamships and their smokestacks lying on the shore, as a result of the fury of the storm.

After 10 – 12 days our homestead seekers returned. Now we knew where our new home would be.

Mother was ill during the greater part of the journey, suffering intensely from seasickness. Serious stomach trouble developed anew, resulting in loss of strength. She realized that her days were numbered and that she should hardly see the new home. Mrs. G. Lange, shared the same fate, suffering much from sickness. All were much depressed, because of these conditions, for both had been filled with enthusiasm for the new home. We bought out the interests of the others in the team and buggy. The spring wagon was traded for a lumber wagon and transformed into a regular prairie schooner. The most necessary belongings of ours and H. Maas were loaded, leaving room for the parents and thus the journey began. We boys walked barefoot following the wagon. H. Lange followed us with horse and wagon. A.L. and J.H. Mehrens, hired transportation later. J. Grummer and F. Pundt having found employment remained awhile.

We were four days en-route. During the entire time it was hot. Drinking water very often was warm and not of the best quality. At night we were severely molested by the mosquitoes. We arrived on August 1, at 9 o'clock in the evening on the farm sold by Patrick. For three months we had traveled always toward the setting sun, on water and on land, using every kind of

transportation. Tired, sick and depressed, we finally arrived our goal. We were beginning a new chapter in life in a new sphere of activity. What had the future in store for us? What difficulties were to be overcome? To begin, we had to provide a night's lodging. The log cabin had not been inhabited for some time and was nearly hidden among prairie grass. The first night was spent in the wagon, while we children lay beneath it. Crickets and grasshoppers made a murderous racket, while the mosquitoes sang their vesper-melody.

The next day we began with the renovation of our wooden palace. It contained a fireplace, a chimney of hewn timbers, plastered with clay. The roof was of clapboards, the floor of boards from a sawmill and a porch on the South side of hewn wood. The second day my brother drove to Iowa City to get the necessary kitchen utensils, furniture and groceries. On the fourth day mother's condition grew so serious that she died during the afternoon. At her side were my sisters Gesine, Anna and myself. Father had gone to seek a doctor. The people had failed to understand him. When he returned he found his life's companion at rest and no longer in need of assistance. When my brother returned from Iowa City, we had to seek for a place of burial. A man informed us that at the old trading place along the road near the timber, where Whiting lived, a few graves could be found. We found this to be

correct. There were a few graves on the South side of the road. We buried mother on the North side of the road. A tombstone still marks the place of her burial.

We succeeded in remodeling the old log cabin. Father and J. Maas sawed boards per armstrong. A small addition was constructed. The cook-stove was placed into the fireplace, so as to economize on space. Beds were built one over another as on the "Juno". The old folks slept in the lower beds and the children had to climb into the upper beds. Tables and chairs were dispensed with. While on the "Juno" we had learned to restrict ourselves to bare necessities. Herman Lange built a hut of long grass, where the cemetery of South Amana is now situated. A. Lange and J.H. Mehrens lived in the two log cabins where the slaughterhouse now stands.

Now my brother returned to Davenport to get the rest of our belongings. Sometime later Gerd Monnich and Gerd Munderloh came with their families from Peoria, Ill.. We had informed them of our whereabouts in this small America. Both had lost a child through death. G. Monnich stayed with Mehrens and G. Munderloh came and stayed with us. Thus three families lived in our small house. Now we were all once more united and could sing. Finally the hour has come, where we are in our American home. G. Monnich built a sod house east of what is now South Amana. All had bought land by

this time and at present there was plenty of work to prepare for the winter. The drinking water was not good. We had to carry it from a spring, where the slaughterhouse now stands. We had poor success making wells. Monnich and Munderloh were carpenters, Mehrens was a blacksmith. These performed all work of their profession. However, there was a lack of equipment. Blacksmith Mehrens had but a fire of wood and a stone or log as anvil to do his work. The rest of us performed other duties. A few cows and the horses which we had brought were in need of hay. The grass had to be cut with a scythe which was strenuous labor. The prairie grass was tough and full of stubble, so that the scythe soon got dull. It was a hot, dry summer. The change of climate, the impure water, made us weak in addition, the same plain meals every day, since many things could not be obtained and money began to be scarce, made us more or less sick.

The beginning of September many of us were ill with a fever. A physician's care was difficult to obtain, and proved useless. Mehrens and Mrs. G. Lange were seriously ill. Arend Lange attempted to cut grass at night, because of the heat. He was immediately stricken with a fever and died in a few days. He was buried west of mother. Three days after this J.H. Mehrens died. His grave is South of mother's. During

this time Mrs. Lange also died; she was buried next to her husband. A certain fear came over us. Many still were sick and no one knew how quick another might be called. With sorrowing heart, but confidence in God, we had to yield to the inevitable. In a short time six of those dear to us became a victim of death. In later years I had a tombstone at mother's grave and had her name inscribed.

Before I proceed I will try to give a topographical description of our home. From Davenport we were located in a northwesterly direction, in the lowlands of the Iowa River in Iowa County. The soil was heavy, partly mixed with sand. It was covered with a heavy growth of grass. Along the creeks and foothills there was nice timber such oak, walnut, hickory, willow, and elm. Some of the higher lands were level and some rolling. Much of it contained clay soil. It also was covered with dense grass. The main roads and the old pike roads followed the course of the river mainly. The first settlers followed these on account of the transportation, the water, the woods and the protection. The old trading post, the Indians and the forts had to give way to the march of progress. Occasionally one will still find arrows and other relics of the Indians.

In fall Fred Pundt and John Grummer arrived and bought government land. Pundt bought where the

drainage ditch ends in the Iowa River. Then he returned to Chicago and worked as ship carpenter. John Grummer went to Benton County, bought near the present town of Luzerne, where some of his descendants are still living. The first winter was mild. The fever ceased and all were able to work. March was quite cold with a heavy snowfall. In Spring of 1855 we bought three yoke of oxen and a breaking plow. Prairie land was broken, houses and barns were built, fences erected, everybody endeavored to improve his place. In the fall a number got sick again of the fever. By this time the stage road was a busy place. Transportation was mostly by oxen. More and more emigrants traveled the road westward, coming from Germany, Sweden, Holland, Scotland and Norway. In 1885 a sect called the Amonites (Amana Society) originating in South Germany came into this vicinity and bought land from Whiting and Morrison. This was the beginning of the present colony. Later many more of their faith came and thus the colony expanded. They bought up the property of most of the first settlers. Today they consist of seven towns and villages. They engage in horticulture, agriculture, raising of hogs and cattle. Tobacco and grapes were raised in large quantities, but mostly for their own gratification. Many of them were craftsmen and, hence, established many industries. They obtained a reputation in the manufacture of woolen goods. Their organization is

communistic. The executive body consisted of elders and a superior, who received instructions from a spirit by inspiration, and these instructions were a law to the members of the colony. Meals were had in common, but the sex were segregated. Marriages were permitted in emergencies, severe obligations being imposed. Song and prayer occupied much time. The plan of their towns and the architecture were 100 years behind the time. Queer Brethren! Their servitude and dependency was repellent to me. The favorite song: "Liberty, my fancy, which my heart doth fill, come with all the glory sweet angelic thrill" etc. was so deeply rooted in my heart, that it caused me to regard the superiors of this organization with suspicion.

At this time Nebraska experienced a boom because of its fertile plains. It was stated that the cattle could feed during the winter on buffalo grass with very little additional hay. In 1856 Monnich, Menderloh, Timmerman and the heirs of Mehrens sold their land to Amana Society, realizing a profit of \$ 1,000. Late in the fall they emigrated with their property per prairie schooner, 60 miles northwest of Omaha. They settled near Hooper. Mehrens settled near the Missouri river, close to the present City of Blair.

The following winter 1856/57 was a very severe one. The Buffalo grass was buried beneath the snow. Cottonwood trees were cut down, so that the horses

and cattle could eat the bark and buds, but in spite of that many perished. In the Spring they went to Missouri to replace their stock. Iowa also had a snow covering from 3 to 4 feet on the level. We constructed a sled and in the middle of March we could still travel over the snow, even, over the fences.

Weddings offered a variation from the daily routine and were observed according to European customs. A Swiss, name Zimmerman, married the widow Mehrens. Fred Spaerfusz married Ahlke Lange and Ondeas my sister Anne. The fair sex was in the minority. I was the chief sufferer since my comrades were all older and crowded me aside.

Rain dissolved the mass of snow in the Spring and caused the river to overflow. My brother and I made a boat out of rough boards, which we had sawed during the winter. Necessity proved the mother of invention. Water and ice was our element from childhood days, having afforded us, much pleasure and valuable service.

Many humorous events could be related, but it would lead too far. Such events are common in all new settlements. Whiskey was cheap at that time, 18c to 25c a gallon by the barrel, or 50c by the single gallon. Nearly everybody had some in the home and it was used as a preventative against fever. For some it proved harmful. They became drunkards and ruined

themselves and their families. In 1857 we purchased a McCormick reaper. For three years I cut grain and hay with it by means of two yoke of oxen. Schoots plowed their corn with it. It was no expert work, nevertheless, quite an improvement.

John Grummer lived in Benton County. The Amana Society had erected a flour mill. This mill was closest to him. Twice a year, in the Spring and Fall, he made this trip with a yoke of oxen, to get wheat ground. If everything went well, it took from 8 to 10 days. There was no bridge or ferry, so he had to cross the river as best he could, mostly on the ice. In the Spring this proved dangerous at times. At one occasion he had to wait a week for colder weather. When it finally arrived, we made arrangements to help him. The ice was thin and smooth. We scattered sand in a narrow path, unhooked the oxen and began to lead one with a rope. Some distance from shore, he fell through the ice, but he succeeded in breaking the ice and gaining the shore. When the second one arrived at the hole, he remonstrated, but "in the time of need the devil feeds on flies"; that must have been his thoughts for he made a leap into the hole and swam to the shore. There upon we lugged the wagon and the cargo, piece by piece, across the ice. Then J. Grummer could proceed on his journey. Such and similar incidents are frequent with pioneers.



In the fall of 1855 Iowa City was connected with the world by railway. We were 25 to 28 miles from Iowa City. Yet it was quite an advantage since upon arrival, Davenport was the nearest railroad station.

In the spring of 1856, 650 Mormons arrived per railway in Iowa City, direct from England. They camped near Clark's Mill. Preparations were made to migrate across country to Salt Lake City. In 1848 this sect had begun with the building of a New Zion at Salt Lake City. After leaving Iowa City they camped a half a mile from Maas's burial place. They conducted a service, railed at our government, complained about sufferings imposed upon them by the heathen. They claimed, as God led the children of Israel through the desert, so would they be led to the New Zion, and since they were in possession of many wives, they soon would become a large people and then convert all heathens. During the sermon sentinels were posted so there might not be any intercourse of their people with the heathens. The fairer sex was closely guarded, since they had some bitter experiences at Iowa City in this respect. Monday morning they broke camp. They had two wagons loaded with provisions, pulled by oxen. Each family had a two wheeled cart, loaded with their belongings. The men pulled and guided the cart and the women pushed the same. More contingents follow later.

In 1857 gold was discovered in Colorado. This filled the stage road with travelers. Work on the Rock Island track had also begun by this time. Separately, but mostly in groups, the prairie schooners were seen moving Westward. On some of the wagons was inscribed: Pike's Peak. Even the whiskey bottle was so branded. The travelers were mostly easy going youths, efficiently weaponed and five or six to a wagon. Many a fat goose, turkey or rooster took French leave and traveled with the troop. But it also had advantages. The settlers sold their pro....

## From Horses to Helicopters

*By George E. Knapp<sup>11</sup>*

I have lived through an era in which I have seen many transitions. When I was born on April 25, 1907, the horseless carriage – later known as the automobile – was beginning to take the place of the horse for transportation. The airplane was in the experimental stage, and many machines were beginning to take shape. These were destined to revolutionize farming and industry.

During my lifetime, the automobile, tractors, the airplane and the helicopter have been perfected to a high degree of efficiency. This has been named “The Machine Age”. We are now going into “The Space Age”, in which man has been sent into orbit around the earth and landed safely in this space capsule.

When I was a small boy, it took my father almost a month to plow 80 acres, with three horses hitched to a one-bottom plow (dubbed a “foot-burner”), and he walked many miles in the process. I remember seeing him walk over the summerfallowed ground in early spring, scattering seed wheat by hand, from a pouched sack which hung from his shoulder. Now a man with a

tractor and modern plows or drills, can cover many acres in one day.

When my parents came to Harrington on the 5th of August, 1905, it was a thriving town with many activities; among them a flour mill, built in 1899 at the cost of \$ 25.000 and two brickyards, which supplied the brick for many of the old buildings which still stand. The clay for the bricks was procured from the Bill Beck land, a short distance from town. A combined harvester factory was started by Dunning & Erich in 1910 and built harvesters until 1980. The population increased to about 1.070 in a few years.

Over the years the farm population decreased on account of the drought and more land was required to make a living. This in turn reduced the business which populates a town and today, in 1965, the population is only 640.

Upon reaching Harrington by ship and train, my parents were taken into the farm house of Christoph and Pauline Knapp one mile and a half southeast of town. They had traveled about seven thousand miles from Betzingen, Germany, which took them several weeks. They brought with them some bedding, clothing, a few keepsakes and two babies. My sister Hedwig was born January 16, 1902 and brother Karl was born March 14, 1904. My father had served two years in the German army after he became 20 years of

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<sup>11</sup> *George Knapp is the son of Gottlieb Knapp and Christina Sauer from Betzingen and nephew of Johann George Knapp (Betzingen) and Anna Maria Riehle (Maehrigen).*

age and he awarded a “sharpshooters” decoration while he was there. After discharge from the army he became a mail carrier, which post he held until he left for America. My father was born October 31, 1876 and mother was born June 19, 1876. They were married September 27, 1900.

Uncle Chris emigrated from Germany in 1881, to evade military service. He was born April 8, 1863 and died August 3, 1959 at the age of 96. In 1889 he sent for his cousin, Pauline Walker and met her in the town of Sprague, where they were married. She was born February 27, 1871 and died in 1934. Two children were born to them; Mary on August 16, 1890 and Karl on April 1, 1894. Karl died of scarlet fever in 1911.

The first craft my father learned here, was sewing sacks with the threshing crew that harvested his brother George’s crop that year. Uncle George came to the States in 1879, before he was 18 years of age, to evade army service. He worked with a logging crew in Wisconsin part of the first year and came to Washington in 1880. Over a period of years he acquired a section and three quarters of land. In 1899 he went to Germany and married Maria Riehle. While he was gone that year, his homestead land was farmed by George Turner, Elwood’s father. Uncle George and Aunt Maria lived on their farm where George, Junior now lives, until 1914. They retired from active farming

and moved to town. Seven children were born to them; Christopher, Mary, Margaret, William, George, Hazel and Jean. Christopher died of diphtheria August 2, 1908 at the age of 8 years and 8 months. Uncle was born August 13, 1861 and died November 11, 1931. Aunt Maria was born February 22, 1877 and died July 7, 1945.

My father had two other brothers; Karl was born in 1871 and died in 1891, and Christian married a widow with two children and is buried at Marshalltown, Iowa; he was born in 1867 and died in 1904.

With the help of his brothers, my father bought a quarter section of land with buildings which were two miles south of town. I remember some of the cold winter nights in the old house, when the cloth-wrapped warm brick which my mother had placed at my feet, became cold and I lay shivering in the dark, wishing for morning to hurry in coming ...

When Hedwig started to school in town, she learned the English language and taught our parents, Karl and me as she learned. Two of my sisters were born on our first farm; Pauline on January 7, 1909 and Alice on August 8, 1911. I started to school in town also and was taught by a Miss Perry. When I was in the second grade, we moved to Uncle George’s farm, nine miles west of town. My first teacher at the old Knob Hill school was Jessie Watson (later Mrs. Emil Jahn). We

moved back to the home quarter for the busy season the next year.

Our neighbors, the Cardwells had a boy John, who was my age and we got into considerable mischief together. They had a bulldog and we had a shepherd, who fought every time they met at the crossroad. I remember many times when our dads beat and pulled at the dogs to get them apart.

One time I was going to spend the night with John at their other farm house, about two miles away, where they were camping temporarily; as I walked along the dusty road, a topless car came along and the driver invited me to hop in. We came to the draw where Timm's dam is now and the car took a terrific bounce as it went through the ditch. There were no culverts or bridges in most of the draws in those days. This was my first automobile ride and as I bounced about three feet up from the back seat, I thought fearfully – surely I will land in the road when I come down – but my momentum brought me safely down on the seat again.

A boy by the name of Harry Lohman, who lived with his uncles, the Hollopeter brothers (where John Simpson lives now), taught Karl and me to snare squirrels with a sack twine noose. He would place the noose over a squirrel hole and lie down in hiding behind a sage brush. He then whistled like a squirrel and eventually one would get curious and poke his head out. Harry

jerked the twine and caught him by the neck.

In 1915 we moved back to Uncle George's place and we farmed both of his farms. My dad rented the quarter south of town to Gooleys. It was at this time that there was a lot of wind and dry weather, causing the land to blow. I remember walking over the sand drifts that almost covered the barbed wire fence, leaving only the post tope showing.

One day mother, Pauline, Alice and I went to town with one horse and the buggy to get some groceries. I had saved up the \$ 3.50 necessary to order a Benjamin pneumatic air rifle and got it from the post office that day. After finishing our shopping, we visited with Aunt Maria and our cousins. Aunt Maria insisted that we stay for supper, so it was sundown by the time we started for home. However, the moon was shining brightly as we walked the horse over a steep hill about one mile and a half from town. Suddenly we saw a man approaching and as he came up to the horse, he grabbed its bridle and stopped us without saying one word. Quick as a flash, mother reached under the seat for my shiny new air rifle and pointing it, said, "Let go or I'll shoot!" The man let go as if he had been burnt and away we went with the horse in a high gallop.

One of my duties was to hunt the milk cows, which were turned out on the roadway when they could not feed in the fields. Since there were many crossroads,

the cows could wander in several directions. I soon learned to find the fresher tracks, but even so, I walked many miles bringing the cows home.

One fall day as Karl, Pauline, Alice and I were going toward Knob Hill school in our buggy, just north of Herb Defabaugh's place, a coyote came staggering out of L.P. Turner's field and came for our horse. Karl was old enough to realize that there was something wrong and we dashed toward Defabaugh's place. Herb told us that he did not have a gun, but he telephoned the Turner ranch for help. One of Turner's men, Bruce Henneburger, came galloping on a saddle horse, carrying a shotgun. He overtook the coyote and killed it. The coyote had rabies and I have often thought that we were fortunate that we were not walking, as we did sometimes in the spring of the year when dad needed all of the horses for seeding.

Many coyotes had rabies at this time and one went into the yard at the Ernest Lamp place, tore all of Mrs. Lamp's clothes off the line and bit some of their milk stock and some chickens. Of course, the infected animals and fowl had to be disposed of.

The biggest thrill we had at Knob Hill was racing buggies away from school in the afternoon. We always tried to beat our neighbor, Foster Keeran out of the school yard and usually succeeded because he was under a handicap. As the teacher stayed at his place

and rode with him, he had to wait for her to close up the schoolroom. Sometimes, when the weather was good, Alice was excused from the schoolroom early, as she was in the lower grades. We coaxed her into getting the horse ready and then we always got a head-start on Foster.

We lived in Uncle George's farm house nearest town during harvest one year and there we became acquainted with mulberry trees. There were so many of the mulberries that we got a little sick, sometimes. In those days almost every farm had a fruit orchard of two to four acres, with apples, cherries, plums, apricots and peaches. This gave farm families a good portion of their winter fare.

One night as we were all in bed, we were awakened by something thumping noisily on the stairs that went to the second story of the house. Dad got out of bed, lit a kerosene lamp, and looked around but he could not find anything. The next morning at breakfast, our neighbor, Charlie More, who was separator man and slept upstairs, remarked in a quiet voice, "Did you hear the Devil's grandmother walking up and down the stairs last night?" My parents chuckled at this, but we youngsters did not quite understand it. Dad explained later that it was a rat, no doubt.

One crop that we harvested on this place was re-crop on fall plowing and yielded only 4 bushels to the acre. I

was tending header and our neighbor, John Keeran, was sewing sacks for dad. One day John got tired of doing so little, so he traded jobs with me and I learned to sew sacks.

Dad bought a pony from J.J. Cormana for us, that was trained to round up cows and horses. The first time that I rode her bareback out in the field to get the cows, she turned quickly in behind the cows and stopped; I kept right on going and hit the dirt. She was trained to turn with knee pressure and would always stand when the reins were dropped. Her name was Cricket and she weighed about 800 pounds. She saved me a lot of time and walking after that, especially when the cows were turned out on the road.

I remember the first Russian thistles that became thick upon the summer fallow. One fall day we were going to visit some neighbors and we saw men in a field with a long cable strung between two wagons. As they drove along, the cable pulled the ripe weeds loose and when the wind came up, the weeds tumbled across the landscape, dropping seeds as they went. This faulty method soon seeded the whole country with the weeds.

In 1917 my parents bought their first automobile, a big roomy Chalmers that cost \$ 1.275. We broke many a rear spring on it, because the dirt roads were full of chuckholes. They drove it until 1923, when they

bought a Model T Ford for \$ 600.

While I was at the Pioneer Picnic with the Keerans in 1918, I was watching a baseball game and as I sat on the sidelines near third base, a batted ball hit and broke my nose. I was knocked cold and that ended the picnic for me. I hemorrhaged so much that I almost died.

Hedwig was going to high school during this period of years and stayed with Aunt Maria. The influenza epidemic hit Harrington in the winter of 1918-1919 and many of the local people succumbed to it. Hedwig had double pneumonia and lost all the hair on her head, but it grew out again later. We did not see her until the epidemic was over. Only dad went to town when there was urgent need for supplies. None of us on the farm got the "flu".

Dad took us all to see a circus in Davenport one day and left a man at the farm to do the chores. When we got home late that evening, dad went to the bunkhouse to talk to the hired man, but he was not there. Finally we found him in the root cellar, where he had been nipping on hard cider all day and he went to sleep in the cellar way.

In 1919 my cousin, Mary Knapp, was hired to teach at Willow Springs school, three miles south of our home and stayed at our house, so Pauline, Alice and I went to



school with her in our buggy. The favorite pastime of the boys at recess and noon was drowning out ground squirrels and clobbering them with a club. This was executed by Andrew and George Kaputa, Henry Dixon and me. The only other pupils were Anna Kaputa and Donavan Warwick. Donavan started to school that fall at the age of five and after going a few days, he said, "I don't want to go to school anymore."

In the fall of 1920 my parents bought a section of land six miles south of Harrington and we went to Liberty school, one mile north of our section. For six weeks in the spring of 1921, I went to school at Pleasant Hill, just south of Crab Creek on the Tokio road. I was helping an old lady, Mrs. Lampartner, milk cows while her son, Chris was seeding at another place. The first evening, as I set the so-called milk stool – a 5-gallon kerosene can – down to start milking \*\*\*bang! The darned heifer kicked the can back against the wall, so the next time I went up to her, I rammed my head into her flank as I sat down and she decided that I was the boss. Pretty soon there was another crash and I looked around to see Mrs. Lampartner lying under two cows; her cow had kicked her off the stool, so I went over and helped her up. By the time I quit working there, I had those cows pretty well trained.

I rode Chris' saddle horse to school, which was about one mile and a quarter up the creek and I had to ford

the creek in water that was higher than the stirrups on the saddle.

The first year that I went to high school in town, I traveled by bicycle, walked a few times and drove a horse on a two-wheeled cart. The most novel conveyance was the cart: The horse that I drove had been one of Uncle George's pair of driving horses. He was 21 years old and although dad had worked him in the field for several years, he could still run of trot very well. He was a stubborn old devil, however; when I let him stand while I pulled the cart ahead to hook him up, he would take off for the barn. When I tried to back him between the shafts, he would rare up and strike at me. I soon found that by hanging onto his halter and pulling my feet off the ground, he could not strike me. But when we took off with the cart ... wow! I would run him for about half a mile, let him walk for a short distance and then he could trot six miles to town without stopping.

During the winter we had a spell of very cold weather, so I stayed with the E.F. Stuermer's in town for a while. One Monday morning, Karl took me to town in the old Ford roadster that dad bought for him, and as there was no floorboard in it and the temperature was about 10 degrees below zero, my feet were frozen solid by the time we got there. I had to sit on a chair with my feet in the oven of Mrs. Stuermer's stove until noon to

thaw them out. There were no after-effects however. While I was at Stuermers', two of my cousins from Germany, Marie and Ernst Weible, came to make their homes in Washington.

The next school term, Pauline and I rode to school with Ernest and Ruth Stuermer in their Model T Ford. Their parents had moved to the Washington Water Power sub-station ten miles south of town; Mr. Stuermer was a maintenance man for this company.

On July 21, 1922 my sister Margery was born and being so far behind the rest of us, she was truly the pet of the family. My mother said many times that I was spoiling her.

Alice continued at Liberty school for another year. She rode on our old pony, Cricket, and for several days she drove Cricket hitched to an old stone boat, which served as a sled on the snow that had fallen. There was no brake on her sled, so she had to use her foot for a brake.

In the fall of 1923 Pauline, Alice, Ralph Bowars and I went to town school in my dad's new Ford, with me driving. Ralph lived on the place where Elwood Turner lives now. During the winter, the snowdrifts got too deep for the Ford so we went with two horses on a bobsled for some time. One evening as we were going home, I playfully pushed Ralph off from the plank that

we used for a seat. He was quite fat and rotund, and he rolled down the side of a fill of the road like a barrel, much to the merriment of the rest of us. He took it quite good-naturally, however, and climbed back into the sled.

My sister Hedwig taught school for a couple of years and on July 5, 1924 was married to Robert Green, Junior; When she announced the wedding date, I objected strongly, saying that it would interfere with a fishing trip that I had planned for the 4th of July. Of course, I meant it only in fun. Three children were born to them; Donald, Patricia and Jeanne. Bob and Hedwig moved to Iowa in 1933 to farm some of his father's land.

In my senior year of high school, in mid-April, I went out on our saddle horse, Gypsy, to get the cows one evening; I found them and started them towards the barn, when Gypsy began to fidget for more speed. He loved to run, so I headed him down a long slope at a pretty fair clip. Suddenly I saw a badger hole looming up in front of us, but as he was tough mouthed I could not pull him to one side. He stepped into the hole with his left front foot, turned a summersault and went sailing through the air. I landed on my left shoulder and was partly stunned, but I remember seeing Gypsy sliding along on the top of his head and losing the bridle. He jumped to his feet and galloped for the

barn, leaving me to walk home.

After X-raying my shoulder, the doctors found that my arm bone was broken off just below the socket. This put me in the hospital for six weeks and cost my parents \$ 1.000. I missed the graduation exercises, but got my diploma. I drove the horses on the combine that harvest and because the leaders of the team pulled so very hard on the reins, an abscess formed where the break in my arm had been, and I spent about a month in the hospital that fall.

I took a post-graduate course at high school part of the winter; specializing in typing, shorthand and bookkeeping.

On June 12, 1926 Karl married Emilie Pelzer of Sheridan, Oregon. He became acquainted with her while working near Sheridan one winter. They have two daughters; Donna and Karlene.

From January to June in 1927, I took two quarters of General Engineering at the University of Washington. During the spring vacation, I went to Camp Lewis (renamed Fort Lewis later) with 300 university boys and took part in a movie, "The Patent Leather Kid", starring Richard Bartholmess. We played the part of German soldiers in some war scenes. The movie company paid for our transportation and we that acted as privates received \$ 2.00 per day. The officers of

each group got a bit more for the eight days that we were there.

During the early fall of 1927 it rained so much that Karl and I could not haul the sacked wheat crop for more than a week. The wheat in question was on the Hertrich place, which dad was renting, and it had yielded about 36 bushels to the acre. The wheat in the sacks started sprouting into the ground, so we had to turn all the sacks over to dry them out. The first day that we started hauling again, we had loaded 15 sacks on the trail wagon of Karl's outfit, and when he drove across a hard pan spot, the loaded wagon sunk in to the wheel hubs. The horses could not pull it out, so we had to unload the sacks and after pulling the wagons ahead, we had to carry the sacks up to them. Full sacks would average about 155 pounds.

Karl started farming on his own place, which consisted of 600 acres in 1929, with a Caterpillar gas tractor. He and dad bought a new Holt "36" combine, equipped with a bulk tank. They each bought a new Model "A" Ford truck and we built bulk tanks on them to haul the wheat to the Odessa Union elevator in Mohler. We were second only to Shorty Talkington, to begin bulking in this area. The old Holt has cut 36 crops and we are still operating it. We pulled it with horses on dad's land and used the tractor on Karl's land.

That same year mother, dad and Pauline left for

Germany on the day that I started plowing with Bob Green and Dave Oldenburg as my helpers. Hedwig kept house for mother while they were gone. The folks returned from Germany on the day that we finished harvesting on the home place.

The next four years were depression years; some of the land was blowing and no one had any money, so there was not much excitement. We did organize a grange at Mohler and our programs and dances at the grange hall supplied us with most of our recreation. I took in the apple harvests in 1930 and 1931 to earn a little spending money. One day during this period, I was burning weeds near my neighbors, Ed and Cy Gooley's lower place – nicknamed "Pumpkin Center" – when I saw Ed and Cy with their tractor and plows not far away. I walked over to them and we talked of various things. I noticed that there were numerous large rocks on this area, so I said to Ed, "It would be a good idea to pick up some of those rocks and haul them away". Ed replied with his usual quiet humor, "Hell, George, we'll plow them under."

On the 4th of March in 1934, there was a double wedding at our home place; Pauline married Cecil Longmore of Callaway, Nebraska and I married Hope Hansen of Harrington. We all worked for my parents that year. When the full work was done, Pauline and Cecil headed east where Cecil eventually got a job at

the Cary Steel Mills in Indiana. He is one of the old-timers there now and is well employed. They have four boys; Larry, Jimmy, Nolan and Dick.

In 1935 my mother's brother, Wilhelm Sauer came to visit us from Germany. He almost scared the wits out of Karl by smoking a cigar while riding on the combine. Over all the years that I have harvested, we have had only one fire in the wheat fields that I can remember; it was started by the exhaust on the truck a short distance ahead of the combine. Karl and I put it out quickly by throwing dirt with the shovels that we always carried in harvest time.

Alice married Eldon La Pere of Ava, Illinois on May 15, 1937. After operating the Standard Lumber Company for a few years, Eldon came out to farm with Karl and me in 1944. They have two children; Louise and Leslie.

Our son, Gregory was born January 12, 1935 and daughter Kathryn was born May 18, 1936. In the spring of 1937, Hope and I moved to the Tischner place which my folks bought that year. We almost got flooded out of the old house in the draw; once from the cloudbursts of 1948 and then the spring run-off of snow in 1949. So we built a new house on the hill by the highway in 1949.

Margery married her schoolmate, Dean Armstrong on December 26, 1942 and they have a son, Jan.

My mother died April 5, 1947 and my father died February 15, 1950. They had left behind them in Germany, security, families, friends and a peaceful way of life, to conquer a new world and hoping to again find peace and security. From 1905 until 1937, when they finished paying for the home section, there had been many hardships; but also happiness and we always had enough to eat.

I believe that their dream of being owners of a prosperous home in the great land of America had been fulfilled.

