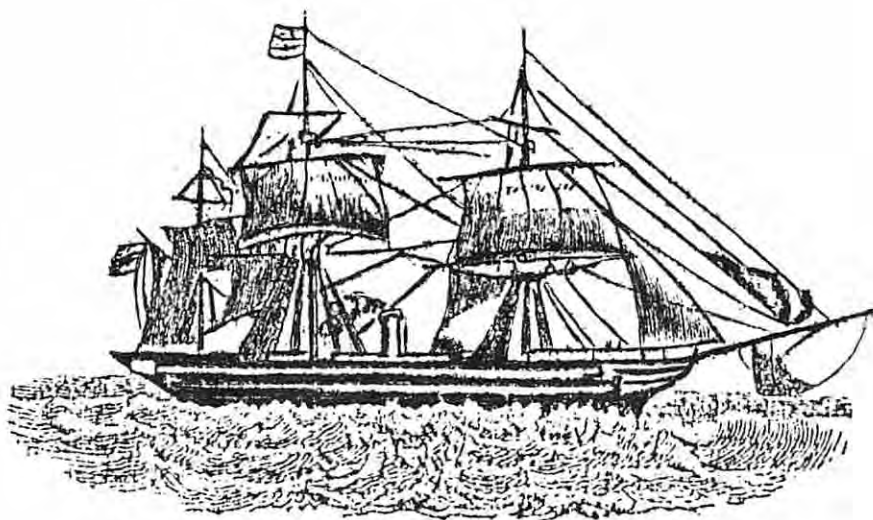


A HISTORY OF IMMIGRATION TO THE BATESVILLE VICINITY



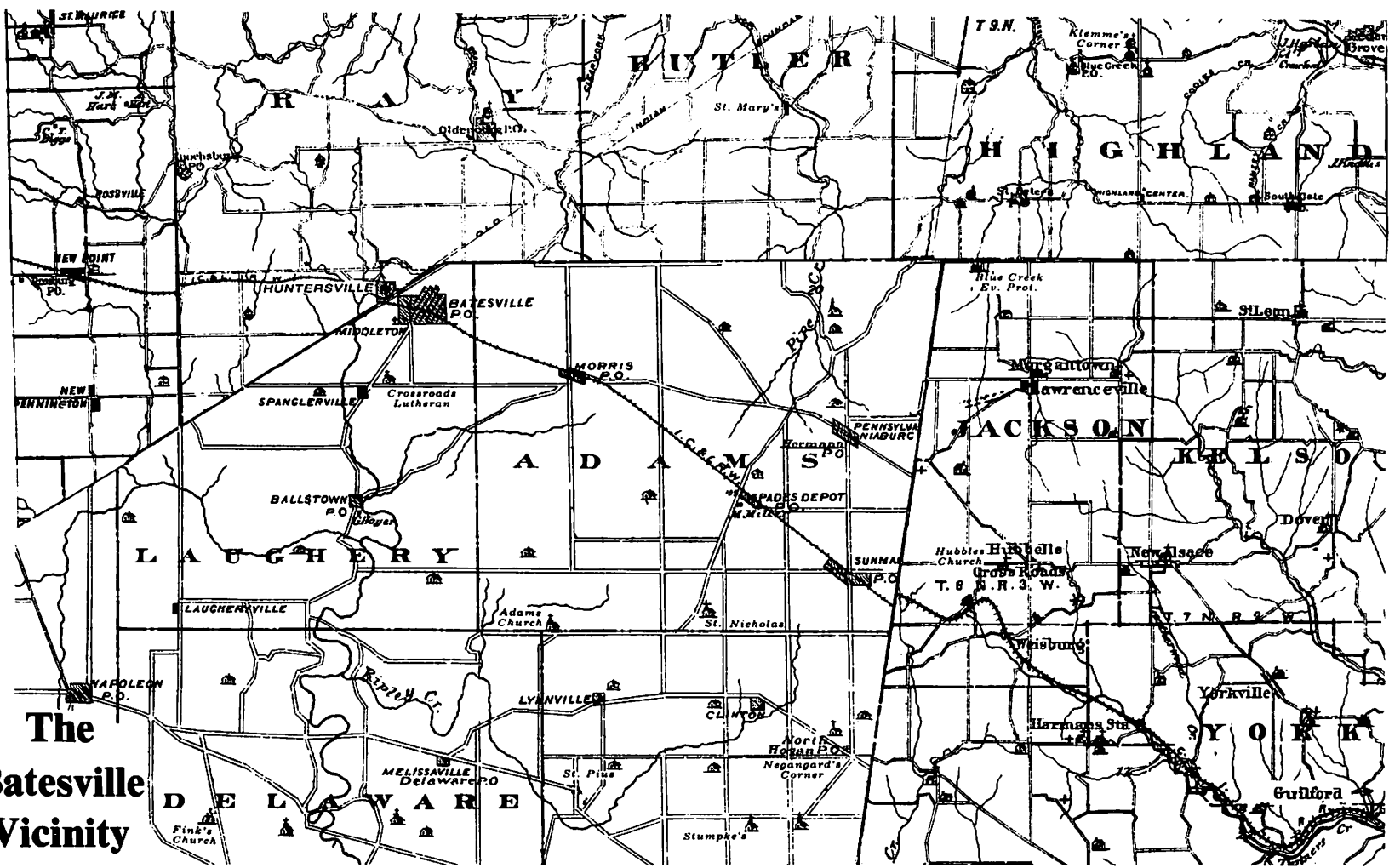
**COMMEMORATING THE SESQUICENTENNIALS OF
OLDENBURG, HUNTERSVILLE AND PENNTOWN, &
THE 900TH ANNIVERSARY OF VENNE, GERMANY**

by David S. Dreyer

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**The
Batesville
Vicinity**





WORTMAN HOME — ADAMS TWP.
BUILT IN 1815

CHAPTER 1 SETTLEMENT OF THE BATESVILLE AREA

1987 marks the 150th anniversary of important events for Batesville, Oldenburg, and Penntown. For Batesville, it is the 150th anniversary of the founding of Huntersville Evangelical Protestant Church (now United Church of Christ). The founding of this church marks the beginning of the community around which the Town of Huntersville was platted in 1841. Huntersville is the oldest part of present day Batesville.

For Oldenburg, 1987 is the 150th anniversary of both the founding of Holy Family Catholic Church and the platting of the Town of Oldenburg. For Penntown, it is the 150th anniversary of the platting of what was then called "Pennsylvaniaburg", the first town in Adams Township and "parent" of the Town of Sunman.

However, the history of these Batesville area communities did not begin just 150 years ago in southeastern Indiana. This year marks the sesquicentennial of their Indiana history, but the history of some of these communities is six to eight times older than their history in Indiana. For example, the Town of Venne, Germany, from which many of the early settlers of Huntersville came, will celebrate its 900th anniversary this year. That history had been forgotten in this country, but now it is being rediscovered.

Many of the ancestors of Batesville area citizens were first Christianized about 1200 years ago. Much of the religion, diet, culture and values of Batesville area communities originated centuries before the immigrants came to this country. Yet none of the extensive histories written about this part of Indiana has provided more than a glimpse about where these communities came from, what they brought to this country, and the major events that affected their development. That is the purpose of publishing this new history.

Much of the settlement of the Batesville vicinity can be traced back to three areas in northern Germany which were not very far from each other: Huntersville to Venne, Engter, Bramsche and surrounding communities just north of Osnabrueck in the Kingdom of Hannover; Oldenburg to Damme Parish about ten miles further north in the Grand Duchy of Oldenburg; and many German settlers in Adams and Laughery townships to Heiligenfelde Parish about forty-five miles further northeast in the Kingdom of Hannover just south of Bremen.

However, the settlement of this area was not exclusively by north Germans. Pennsylvaniaburg was named because many of its early settlers of English ancestry came from Pennsylvania. Penntown was soon heavily settled by south Germans, particularly from Baden and the Bavarian Palatinate. South German settlement was even greater east of Penntown in northwestern Dearborn County.

The entire area around Batesville has long been proud of its German heritage, yet much of this heritage and history has been ignored or forgotten, particularly in the last 50 years. Some families in the communities around Batesville still have 3rd and 4th cousins living in the boyhood homes of their great and great-great grandfathers who left Germany 120 to 150 years ago, but few are aware of each other's existence.

Because this is the 150th anniversary of the founding of Huntersville Church, Penntown, and the Town and Parish of Oldenburg, it is appropriate first to examine the history of both the German and non-German immigration to this region of Indiana, and then to examine the European history of the three areas in northern Germany which have played an important role in the development of Laughery, Adams and Ray townships.

This history should be of special interest to all those of German descent in this region and to the non-German community as well. It was this immigration which has determined much of the development and culture of this area.

EARLY NON-GERMAN SETTLEMENT

The Indians did not have any major settlements in southeastern Indiana at the time of white settlement. There were from time to time Indian encampments such as the one by the Shawnee Indians during the winter of 1788 near the junction of Ripley and Laughery creeks in northern Delaware Township.

Significant Indian presence disappeared in the years after the Battle of Tippecanoe in 1811. The last meeting of Indians in this area reportedly occurred in 1833 near Metamora where about forty gathered for the last time before being removed further west.

The earliest non-Indian settlement of this area was by Englishmen and people of English and Irish descent from eastern states and Kentucky. White settlement of this area came primarily through Dearborn County, although some settlers came to Napoleon by way of Madison.

Families settled near Lawrenceburg as early as 1796. In 1800 the Indiana Territory was established, and Lawrenceburg was platted in 1802. Gradually settlement extended north along Tanner's Creek and then up the ridge to Yorkville, New Alsace, Hubble's Corner, and Penntown. Another route followed the road from Lawrenceburg to Napoleon.

Other settlement routes went north up the Whitewater River valley towards Brookville and east from Aurora towards Versailles. John Conner established trading posts near Cedar Grove in 1803 and at Connersville in 1808. However, those routes did not directly affect the Batesville area.

In about 1811 some of the Alley brothers from Virginia settled along Pipe Creek in Franklin County. Martin Ewbank and his son, John, settled a mile north of Guilford in the same year. John Kelso from Ireland settled 3/4 of a mile northeast of present day Dover as early as 1813.

In 1814 Daniel and Henry Wooley settled in Shelby Township of Ripley County becoming the county's first white settlers. In 1815 Richard and Dorcas Wortman from Kentucky settled five miles west of Sunman, and Robert and Nansy Johnson had settled in the Penntown vicinity by the same year.

David Perrine of New York City arrived in the Yorkville vicinity in 1816, the same year Indiana became a state. Also that year the Osburn family arrived in the vicinity of St. Mary's in Franklin County. In 1817 William George and his brother settled in Ray Township near present day Oldenburg.

The Lawrence family from Pennsylvania settled around Lawrenceville by 1818 where a United Brethren Church was established nearby in 1819 or 1820. John Sunman, Sr. and his son Tom arrived in 1819 from Holtby near York, England. They settled west of Penntown where he, his wife Ellen, and two sons are buried on the point across the lake in Indian Lakes campground.

Napoleon was among the earliest settlements in the area having been platted in 1820. It was located at the junction of the Michigan Road from Madison to Indianapolis and the road from Lawrenceburg to Napoleon. The Elias Conwell house built in 1822 at that junction is still standing as is the nearby Central Hotel built about the same time.

Many of the early churches in Dearborn and Ripley counties were Methodist or Baptist. The Baptist Church was particularly strong among New Englanders. A Baptist Society was established in the Penntown area in 1823 as a branch of the Little Cedar Grove Baptist Church south of Brookville. It became the Pipe Creek Baptist Church in 1832.

Franklin Baptist Church was established south of present day Negangard's Corner in 1823 as a branch of 2nd Manchester Baptist Church at Hogan Hill. The Methodists also began meeting in various homes and schools around Clinton about 1830. St. Paul's Methodist Church south of Sunman is the outgrowth of this organization.

The first Catholic Church in southeastern Indiana was built at McKenzie's Crossroads (Dover) in 1824 by Irish Catholics from Maryland. They had established a congregation there as early as 1820. Just east of Dover is an area still known as "Tipperary".

SOUTH GERMAN SETTLEMENT

Some Germans had been among the earliest settlers in this vicinity. Phillip, Casper, and Jared Michael from Baden purchased land one mile southeast of present day Weisburg in 1817 and 1818. They were part of the first large German migration to America in the 19th century.

These immigrants of 1817 had suffered a series of disastrous crop failures culminating in unusually extreme weather in 1816, "the year without a summer". The immigration was a spontaneous movement driven by panic and despair.

A sense of restlessness and instability had also been created by the Napoleonic Wars which the restoration of the old regimes in 1815 could not subdue. Many of the immigrants came from southwestern Germany where Napoleonic sentiment was particularly strong. The area of heaviest emigration was from the Dreisamkreis around Freiburg, Baden.

Crops improved in southern Germany in the fall of 1817, and many of the people who had attempted to leave experienced great difficulties and failed to reach America. Consequently, emigration became unpopular, and it was not until around 1830 that Germans once again began to migrate to America in any great numbers.

In December of 1833, Thomas W. Sunman, the son of John Sunman, Sr. wrote to his brother John in Cincinnati, "I hear there is more Dutch in these parts, tho' some that are here are already discouraged having spent his money in land, has no friends or any thing to live on." In January of 1837, Mr. Sunman wrote that he was buying land at sales in competition with the German immigrants.

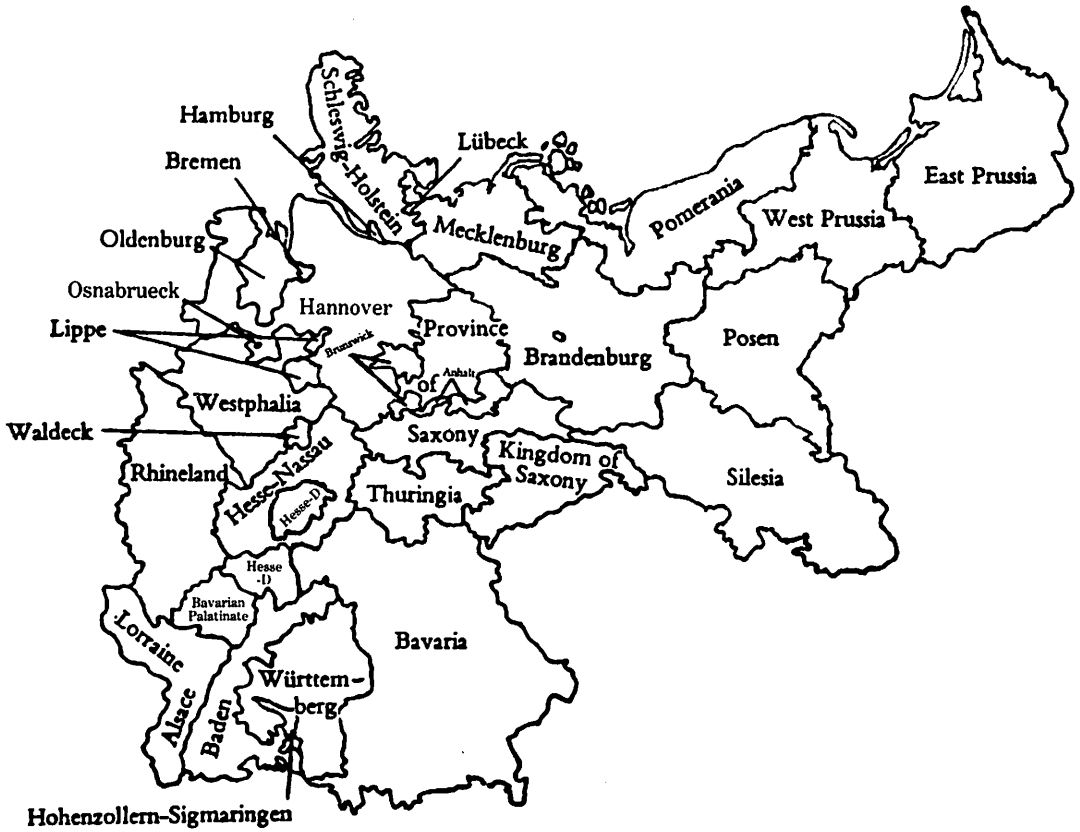
Many of the German settlers of the 30s also came from Baden in southern Germany and from Alsace, then in western France. Others came from Bavaria, the Bavarian Palatinate (or Rhein Pfalz), Hesse-Darmstadt, Wuerttemberg, and Switzerland. Once again the crops in the grape-growing regions of southern Germany had failed. The years 1830 and 1831 were also marked by cholera, political upheaval and turmoil throughout Europe.

The southern German immigrants were mostly small farmers whose lands had been divided and subdivided through divisible inheritances. They were people who had some possessions, but they were afraid of losing what little they had.

This time, once the immigration began, it did not stop. The successful immigrants wrote home in the words of the German poet Goethe, "Amerika, du hast es besser!" These immigrants to southeastern Indiana from southern Germany were primarily, but not exclusively, Catholics.

A small community of Catholics from Grosswallstadt in northwestern Bavaria (between Frankfurt and Wuerzburg) settled around St. Peter in 1833. German settlement from Alsace occurred around Yorkville where Mass was first celebrated in 1833, around New Alsace

Areas Included Within Germany 1871-1918





ENGTER-VENNE-DAMME VICINITY
NEAR OSNABRUECK, GERMANY

where a Catholic Church was established in 1833, and around Hubble's Corner where a Lutheran Church was also established in the year 1833.

Protestant settlement from the Palatinate, Baden and Wuerttemberg is seen around Blue Creek at St. Jacob's Evangelical Protestant Church (now U.C.C.) which was established in 1838, and at its sister church, St. John's at Pennsylvaniaburg, established in 1840-41.

Catholics from Baden, particularly from Offenburg, established a church at St. Nicholas west of Sunman in 1836 and at St. Pius further south in 1854. Protestants from Baden also settled along the Napoleon-Lawrenceburg road. German Catholics who settled in 1840 around Morris (then called Springfield) came from both Baden and Oldenburg, Germany. They attended either St. Nicholas or the Holy Family Church at Oldenburg until St. Anthony's congregation was established at Morris in 1856.

NORTH GERMAN SETTLEMENT

By 1837 many of the more recent immigrants were coming from northern Germany. Some of these immigrants were particularly affected by enclosure of common lands and by difficulties in the cottage linen-making industry around Osnabrueck caused by the industrial revolution. In 1837 a financial panic struck U.S. cities, prices of farm commodities soared, and German immigrants in Cincinnati headed towards the countryside for the security of land.

Much of the immigration to Laughery, Ray and Adams townships came from the area along the irregular border between the Grand Duchy of Oldenburg and the Kingdom of Hannover on a line between the cities of Bremen and Osnabrueck. Three groups came in large numbers:

North German Catholics, particularly from the area around Damme in the Grand Duchy of Oldenburg, settled around Oldenburg, Indiana, beginning in 1835. Between 1830 and 1849 some 3,440 emigrants left Damme. A copy of a list of their names is available at the Batesville Public Library.

The second group of immigrants to these three townships came from the Protestant communities surrounding Damme. They established Huntersville Church just a few miles south of Oldenburg, Indiana, in 1837. These Protestant settlers at Huntersville came from towns which form a horseshoe around the western, southern, and eastern sides of Damme Parish. Many of them came from the towns of Bramsche, Engter, and Venne on the southern side of that horseshoe.

Thus Huntersville and Oldenburg families were neighbors back in Germany. The ties between these two communities are much deeper than commonly realized.

In the 1840s a third group of immigrants from the Syke-Heiligenfelde-Wachendorf vicinity south of Bremen settled west of Hub-

ble's Lutheran Church near present day Sunman. They also established St. Stephen's Lutheran Church near what is now Spades in 1843 and Adams Lutheran Church in the southwestern corner of Adams Township in 1852.

Some of this immigration from the Syke-Heiligenfelde region was caused by a potato blight, particularly around 1845 and 46. This blight affected much of northern Europe. Immigrants from the Syke vicinity also settled around Fink's Evangelical Protestant Church north of Osgood and around the Lutheran Church at Napoleon.

Because these three groups were particularly significant around Batesville, the third and fourth chapters in this history will focus on their north German heritage. The next chapter will continue the story of immigration to the Batesville area until the present day.



**THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH AT ENGTER, GERMANY
(A MOTHER CHURCH OF THE HUNTERSVILLE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST)**



**OLDENBURG, INDIANA,
1887**

CHAPTER 2

CREATION OF NEW COMMUNITIES IN AMERICA

Immigration to the Batesville area peaked in the mid-1800s, and the new country began to shape the lives of the immigrants just as they transformed the countryside.

The railroad made its appearance in this region in 1853. New towns sprang up along the route. Batesville was platted in 1852; Spades was established in 1855; Sunman was platted in 1856. Springfield was renamed Morris and platted in 1858.

Oldenburg had become a center for Catholic faith and missions in southeastern Indiana. In 1851 a convent was established at Oldenburg, and in 1866 the Franciscan fathers established a friary in what was the old stone church which remains standing today.

Three of the most notable priests in this region were Father Joseph Ferneding from Ihorst, Holdorf Parish, Oldenburg, Germany; Father Franz Joseph Rudolph from Bettenheim, Alsace; and Father Xavier Weninger from Austria.

Father Ferneding was the first pastor of St. Paul's Church at New Alsace, and he established many of the Catholic Churches in southeastern Indiana. Father Rudolph was the priest at Oldenburg from 1844 to 1866 during which time Oldenburg developed into a Catholic center. Father Weninger began his missionary career at Oldenburg, the first of over 800 missions he held throughout America.

Among the churches established in this area was St. Joseph's chapel at St. Leon in 1841, although for a while it remained part of Dover Parish. St. Anthony's Church at present day Morris was built in 1856. Missions were established at Enochsburg in 1844, St. Maurice in 1859, and Hamburg in 1869. St. Louis Church in Batesville had its beginning in 1870.

The history of the establishment of the early Catholic churches has been well documented in a history entitled "Growth and Development of the Western Missions of the Archdiocese of Cincinnati" written by Sister Dorothea Marie Bockhorst. It is available at the Batesville Public Library.

A variety of Protestant churches were established in the area as well. The predominant faith among Protestant Germans was either Lutheran or Evangelical Protestant. However, both the Baptists and Methodists made in-roads into their numbers. A good example of these relations among Protestant churches is found in the Sunman vicinity:

St. Paul's United Methodist Congregation was established south of Sunman in the early 1830s primarily by families of English descent. It met in houses and schools around Clinton until a church was built at its present site two miles south of Sunman in 1870.

In 1858 the Sunman community erected the first church building in the Town of Sunman. It was a brick church which was open to all denominations and was also used as a town hall.

The Baptists were the first congregation to use the brick church, but they eventually folded. In 1895 the Methodists also used it for about five years. The membership of these two congregations was primarily of German descent. The old brick church was razed about the turn of the century.

The Christian Union Church (now known as the Community Church) was established in Sunman in 1890 using the old brick church as a meeting place. They erected their own building in 1898.

For a while the children of some ethnically German families would attend Sunday School at the Community Church in Sunman, but their parents would send them to the Evangelical Protestant church at Penn-town for confirmation classes. Today the membership of both St. Paul's Methodist Church and the Community Church is primarily of German descent.

There is no burial ground in the town of Sunman. Consequently the cemetery at St. Paul's Methodist Church, Hubble's Lutheran cemetery, and the Penntown Evangelical Protestant (U.C.C.) churchyard remain the burying places for most of the ethnically German as well as non-German families in the Sunman area.

CIVIL WAR PERIOD

In the 1850s immigrants continued to come from many parts of Germany, including Westphalia and Prussia which previously had not seen much immigration to this area. However, immigration began to decline in the years just preceding the American Civil War.

Many of the German immigrants served their new homeland in the Civil War, particularly with the 83rd Indiana Regiment which was with General Sherman at Vicksburg and followed him through Georgia and South Carolina to the sea. It seems quite appropriate that Johann Friedrich Brinkmann from Venne, Germany, who built the Sherman

House in Batesville at its present location should have named it in honor of the Union General under whom many of the immigrants served their new country.

Around this time the grandchildren of the early English immigrants began to intermarry with the children of the German Protestant immigrants. John Sunman Jr.'s daughters Fanny, Minerva, Gertrude, and Alice all married the sons of Germans.

Land in Indiana had been occupied and settled long before the war. Many of the English families had already left for Missouri and other western states before the war. After the war, some of the children of the German immigrants left Indiana for new land in Kansas, Iowa, and Missouri. A new kind of separation was occurring, not with the homeland in Germany, but with the communities in southeastern Indiana.

Nevertheless, the ties with this area were strong: Letters were written relating to family matters and property and often expressing homesickness. An inheritance might be received in Indiana from a family which left years earlier. A young man in Kansas City named "Sunman Rowe" attests to the remembrance of the maiden name of his great, great grandmother from Ripley County.

POST CIVIL WAR SETTLEMENT

The pattern of settlement before the war largely determined the population of this part of Indiana into the 1900s. German immigration to this area continued in part because previous German immigrants had settled here. Post Civil War immigrants tended to come from a variety of places in northern Germany now known simply as Prussia after the Prussian takeover of northern Germany in 1866. Some left to escape Prussian rule.

Throughout this period the immigrants applied for U.S. citizenship, renouncing all allegiance "to any foreign Prince or Potentate and particularly to _____". (The name of the foreign King such as the King of Prussia was written in the blank.)

History became more localized as the important events took place in individual communities rather than affecting the area as a whole. Tradesmen came to the towns: merchants, doctors, wagonmakers, cigar makers, bricklayers, blacksmiths. Oldenburg opened its Academy. Sunman experienced a devastating fire in 1905, and Batesville became industrialized. The woodworking craft in Batesville emerged into the 20th century as a major industry with furniture, hospital equipment, and caskets.

Over the years more people of Irish and English descent came from the southern states. Originally they came from Virginia through Kentucky and later from Kentucky and Tennessee. They brought with them a variety of churches, many of them Baptist. Other nationalities arrived with the coming of the railroads and industrialization.

Many families moved from surrounding communities and the countryside to Batesville. Marriages occurred between communities. Improved transportation and school consolidation furthered this process in recent years. Citizens of this area frequently trace their ancestry to more than one of these immigrant groups.

Many of the descendants of the early English and German immigrants left for the cities of Indianapolis, Cincinnati, and elsewhere. People of other origins came from the cities, particularly to Batesville which had developed a manufacturing base. Others came to live in this area and commute to larger cities.

Although immigration continued, there was no longer any huge influx of people from one particular place outside the area. The families of the earlier immigrants provided most of the population growth. The period of mass movements to the area had ceased. Consequently, the German immigrant culture has remained the predominant one in the Batesville vicinity.

THE ANCESTRY OF BATESVILLE AREA CITIZENS TODAY

Today, northern Ripley, northwestern Dearborn, and southwestern Franklin counties remain the center of a significant population descended from German immigrants. Ripley County as a whole has the second highest percentage of German ancestry of any county in the state, second only to Dubois County in southwestern Indiana. In the 1980 census 53% of its people claimed some German ancestry and 34½% claimed only German ancestry.

Franklin County as a whole has the 4th highest percentage of population with German ancestry. 51% of its people claim some German ancestry and 33% claim only German ancestry. This compares to 34½% of the people of Indiana who claim some German ancestry and 13½% who claim only German ancestry.

However, in the area around Batesville, these percentages are much higher: 74% of the 10,741 people in Laughery, Adams and Ray Townships claim some German ancestry and 60% claim only German ancestry! This is the area of heaviest north German settlement.

Further east, 70% of the 4,882 people in Jackson, Kelso and York Townships of Dearborn County and Highland Township of Franklin County claim some German ancestry, and 50% claim only German ancestry. South German settlement was particularly strong in these townships.

Heavy German settlement extends beyond these seven townships and encompasses about 300 square miles in northern Ripley, southern Franklin, and northwestern Dearborn counties. It extends from Yorkville, New Alsace, and St. Leon in the east, to Napoleon and Enochsburg in the west, and from Peppertown and Klemme's Corner in the north to Stumpke's Corner and Fink's Church in the south. There are approximately 20,000 people in this entire area of whom ⅔ claim

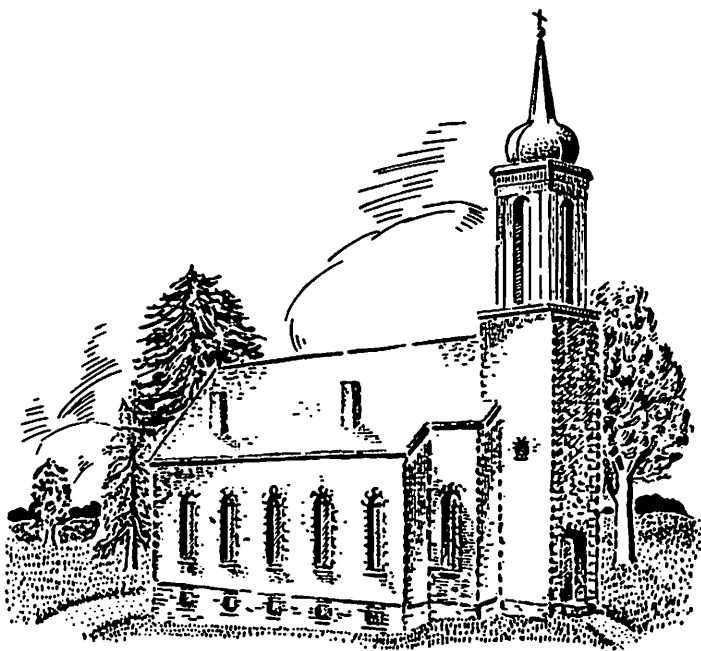
some German ancestry and ½ claim sole German ancestry. Significant German ancestry is also found in Decatur County communities such as Millhausen.

The other significant ancestral groups today in this area are the English and those who claim some Irish ancestry. About a quarter of the population in Ripley and Franklin counties claim some English ancestry and about 14% only English ancestry. About 19% claim some Irish ancestry, but less than 5% claim only Irish ancestry.

The next largest group are of French origin. 4% of the population in these two counties claim some French ancestry, but less than 1% claim only French ancestry. Some of these may even be of German ancestry from Alsace in France. People may change the way they report their origins in the census when political control of their ancestral homeland changes.

Finally, there are only 80 to 160 residents of these two counties who claim solely Dutch, Italian, Scotch, or Polish origin, respectively. Other groups are smaller still. Twelve percent of the respondents to the census in Ripley and Franklin counties did not report their ancestry at all. Thus, the present population of Batesville and the surrounding communities is overwhelmingly German in origin.

The next two chapters will deal specifically with the history of the north German ancestors of many of the Batesville area families. The first concerns their religious history. The second concerns their political and economic history.



**OLD STONE CHURCH AT OLDENBURG
(LATER USED AS FRIARY)**



**ST. MICHAEL'S CHURCH
HEILIGENFELDE, GERMANY**

CHAPTER 3

THE RELIGIOUS AND CULTURAL LEGACY OF NORTHERN GERMANY

Many of the families of northern Ripley and southwestern Franklin counties came from northern Germany, roughly along a line between Bremen and Osnabrueck in what was once the old Kingdom of Hannover and the Grand Duchy of Oldenburg.

The religious and cultural history of the people of northern Germany has much to do with the religious affiliation and values of the people of the Batesville area. The north German Saxons were Christianized 1200 years ago. They speak a dialect of German, somewhat akin to English, called Plattdeutsch or "Low German" from the lowlands of "Lower Saxony".

These north German people were the descendants of the Saxon tribesmen who were Christianized in Germany in 785 by Charlemagne after many years of warfare between the Saxons and the Franks. Their culture was not the commonly portrayed, light-hearted Bavarian "gemuetlichkeit", but the more frugal and austere culture of northern Germany with its Gothic architecture, Biedermeier furniture, and diet which relied heavily on potatoes, cabbage, and pork-based dishes like "knipp" (similar to goetta).

These north German families had a common heritage, a similar history, and a culture which goes back to the Middle Ages. To understand why they left, and what they brought to Indiana as their cultural and religious heritage, we need to find out more about the history of the area where these German immigrants originated.

PRE-CHRISTIAN GERMANY

The year 1985 marked the 1200th anniversary of the Christianization of the Saxon tribesmen who populated northwestern Germany. Prior to the year 785 A.D. the Saxons were a people who worshipped the old Germanic gods such as Odin (Wotan), Donar (Thor), and Freyja—for whom our Wednesday, Thursday and Friday are named.

The Saxons were constantly at war with the Christianized Franks. In the year 785, Karl the Great (Charlemagne), the Christian leader of the Franks, and Widukind, the heathen leader of the Saxons, finally made peace. Widukind was baptized, and the Saxon people were converted to Christianity.

Upon conversion, the Saxons were required to take the following oath: "I renounce the devil and all the devil's ilk and all the devil's works and words. And I renounce . . . Donar and Odin and Saxnot and all the demons who are their companions. I believe in God, the Almighty Father. I believe in Christ, the Son of God. I believe in the Holy Spirit."

Until then, the Saxons, like many of the German tribes, had remained outside the Christian Church and outside the Roman Empire, even in the heydays of the Ceasars. The Roman legions had been badly beaten in the year 9 A.D. in the Battle of the Teutoburg Forest close to present day Osnabrueck. As a result, Roman influence did not extend much beyond the Danube or the Rhine Rivers, and northwestern Germany retained its ancient religion and political independence until the days of Charlemagne, and its Germanic language and culture until the present day.

THE SAXONS IN ENGLAND

Indeed the Saxons gave to England much of the language we speak today. That is why Low German (Plattdeutsch), which the German-Saxons speak, sounds so much like English, which the Anglo-Saxons speak. In about 540 A.D., the Angles, Saxons, and Jutes from northern Germany and Denmark invaded Briton England shortly after the Romans had pulled out. The Saxons settled in the provinces now known as Essex, Sussex, and Wessex (East, South, and West Saxony). Thus, many of the English immigrants to Ripley County probably have common ancestry with German immigrants going back to the Saxons.

These English Saxons were Christianized beginning with the mission of St. Augustine in 597 and St. Birinus of Gaul, and their conversion was completed by time of the Council of Whitby in 664. Anglo-Saxon missionaries, including St. Boniface in 716, were sent back to Germany to try to convert the German Saxons to Christianity, but these efforts were largely unsuccessful until the rule of Charlemagne.

The Saxon rulers of Wessex eventually became the first true Kings of England beginning with Alfred the Great, the son of King Egbert of Wessex. Alfred seized London in 885 and his descendants ruled until the Norman invasion from France in 1066.

LOWER SAXONY IN THE MIDDLE AGES

Back in Germany, early churches were built in the newly Christianized Saxon territories: One of the very first was St. Alexander's Church at Wildeshausen. It was built by Duke Wigbert of Engern. He was a son of the Saxon hero Widukind and was buried in the church while it was still under construction in about 816. The Church became Protestant after the Reformation, and this area was later incorporated into the Grand Duchy of Oldenburg. The Gunter and Timmerman families of Batesville came from Wildeshausen and the Plump family from nearby Goldenstedt.

St. Michael's Church at Heiligenfelde was built in 1230 on the site of a stone church built a century or two earlier. The name Heiligenfelde means "sacred fields". It is likely that a hermit monk had a shelter at or near this site from the 800s. It may have even been a pre-Christian place of worship. Heiligenfelde was the mother church of many of the immigrants to the Sunman vicinity, Spades, and Adams Church.

The town of Venne was first recorded in history in the year 1087. It is this date which will be celebrated this year in Venne on August 20-23. The Church at nearby Engter was built in 1229. This was a period of great religious enterprise. Great Gothic cathedrals were being constructed. The 5th Crusade to wrest the Holy Land from the Moslems was underway at this time. The towns of Venne and Engter were the homes of many of the immigrants who settled Huntersville, as well as of the Dreyer and Niemann families of Sunman-Penntown.

THE REFORMATION

In the 1500s, the Protestant Reformation began. Luther tacked his 95 theses to the door of the church at Wittenburg, Germany, in 1517. In 1521 he was ordered before Emperor Charles V at the Diet of Worms to explain his teachings and ordered to recant them. He did not, and his stand marked the beginning of the Protestant Reformation followed by the religious wars of Europe.

Beginning with the Peace of Augsburg in 1555 the religion of an area — Catholic or Lutheran — was determined by the ruler of the province or kingdom where one lived. However, the wars over religion did not end until the Peace of Westphalia at the end of the Thirty Years War in 1648. Most of Germany had been left devastated.

Many families left their homes to settle in other parts of Germany and elsewhere in order to escape religious persecution. Some of the early German immigration to this country was by dissenting sects and non-conformists. However, the majority of the immigrants were Lutheran. The first group of German settlers arrived in Pennsylvania in 1683, and that immigration continued until the Napoleonic wars.

Most of northern Germany became Protestant after the Reformation. Once again most of the Saxon people were separated from the Catholic Church in Rome, as they had been before Charlemagne, but

this time within the framework of Christian beliefs. However, those parts of northern Germany which were then under control of the Bishop of Muenster remained Catholic.

The reason the Bishopric of Muenster remained Catholic goes back to 1534-35. Religious extremists gained control of the city at that time. In the words of the historian S. Baring-Gould, "Muenster became the theatre of those wild orgies which ever attend mysticism unrestrained, when spiritual exaltation winds up with horrible licentiousness and abominable cruelties."

On Midsummer Eve, 452 years ago, the city was finally attacked and liberated. According to Baring-Gould, "Catholicism was re-established without a dissentient voice within the city." "The inhabitants who survived the catastrophe, even those who had once been zealous partisans of the Reformation, became staunch in their adherence to the ancient Church, and nothing afterwards could induce them to lend an ear to Protestantism of any sort."

Thus, although Wildeshausen, Heiligenfelde, Engter and Venne were Protestant, many communities only a few miles away in the Damme vicinity, which became part of the lands under the Bishop of Muenster, remained Catholic. Many of the German Catholic immigrants to the Batesville-Oldenburg area came from the Damme vicinity. Their Catholic heritage can be traced back to those events in the Reformation. Almost all other German Catholics in this area such as those around St. Nicholas and New Alsace trace their history back to Baden, Alsace, and Bavaria in southern Germany.

RELIGION AMONG THE IMMIGRANTS

It is also interesting to note that while the parishioners at Oldenburg, Indiana, were primarily north Germans, some of their religious teachers—the priests and nuns—came from southern Germany and Austria. Mother Theresa Hackelmeier came from Vienna, Austria, to establish the Convent at Oldenburg in 1851, and the Franciscan Fathers at the Oldenburg Friary came from their Province in Cincinnati originally established by friars from the Austrian Tyrol. The governments of Austria and Bavaria spent several million dollars in missions to the American Germans.

German Protestants did not find as much missionary zeal by the Protestant states back in Germany. There was also an insistence among some German Protestants that services be conducted only in German. Such clauses were frequent in their Church constitutions. St. Paul's Lutheran Church at Crossroads was established in 1851 by Pastor Franke from the Church at Spades. Many families at Crossroads were related to those at Huntersville. Prior to 1920, all sermons at St. Paul's were given in German. English did not become the predominant language until 1927.

As a result of such provisions, missionary efforts of other denominations, such as the Baptists and Methodists, made considerable

headway not only among English settlers, but also among German Protestants who wanted to adopt the language and culture of their new homeland.

However, early Methodist Churches also used German. The Laughery Methodist Mission was established in 1845. Its early records, written in German, show immigrants from the same villages in the Osnabrueck vicinity from which the Huntersville families also came. Those records are now in the DePauw University archives.

There were two major German Protestant denominations in the Batesville vicinity: the Lutherans and the Evangelical Protestants.

The Evangelical Protestant Churches trace their origin to the State Church of Prussia which was organized in the early 19th century at the behest of Kaiser Friedrich Wilhelm III of Prussia to unite Lutheran and Calvinist (Reformed) churches. Other German states followed suit. Today almost all of the Protestant Churches in Germany are known as "Evangelical Lutheran" as a result of this merger.

Six ministers in the United States from the new state churches in Germany organized the German Evangelical Synod of North America in 1840. However, Lutheran churches in America were not forced to merge with Calvinist churches. Consequently, most of them maintained their earlier identity and organized their own synods.

German congregations on the frontier needed ministers. The association of a congregation with either a Lutheran synod or the Evangelical Protestant synod was sometimes determined by the particular pastor the congregation had chosen.

Thus, both Lutheran and Evangelical Protestant churches in the Batesville vicinity trace their history back to what are today called Evangelical Lutheran Churches in Germany. The mother church of Adams Lutheran Church is the Evangelical Lutheran Church at Heiligenfelde, Germany, and the mother churches of Huntersville Evangelical Protestant (U.C.C.) Church are the Evangelical Lutheran Churches at Engter and Venne.

The Evangelical Protestant Churches later merged with other Reformed (Calvinist) churches to become known as Evangelical & Reformed. In recent years, they have further combined with the Congregational and Christian churches (which had previously merged) to form the United Church of Christ. These U.C.C. churches include Huntersville, Penntown, St. Jacob's at Blue Creek, Fink's Church, and St. Peter's at Klemme's Corner.

Lutheran churches in this area, such as Crossroads and Adams Church, eventually became associated with the United Lutheran Church in America, while Hubbles associated with the American Lutheran Church. These two denominations are in the process of combining with a third denomination, the Association of Evangelical Lutheran Churches to form the new Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

The next chapter will deal with the political and economic background of northern Germany and how it affected immigration to this area of Indiana.



PASSPORT ISSUED BY THE
KINGDOM OF HANNOVER

CHAPTER 4 THE POLITICAL & ECONOMIC LEGACY OF NORTHERN GERMANY

Many of the settlers of the Batesville region claimed their country of origin as “Hannover”. How this state came into existence, its relationship with Great Britain, and its demise under Prussian Germany tells us much about the economic and political history of the settlers of the Batesville region. Hannover’s ties with Britain as well as its Saxon origins help to explain why much of this north German heritage has been so easily assimilated—and forgotten—in Anglo-American culture.

HISTORY OF HANNOVER TO 1866

Over the years, the Saxon rulers of northern Germany expanded their domains and eventually these were divided. Upper Saxony to the southeast became known as the Kingdom of Saxony, while Lower Saxony (where most of southeastern Indiana’s Saxon ancestors originated) was primarily a part of the hereditary lands controlled by the ancient Guelph (Welfen) royal family.

During the 13th century these lands became divided among several branches of the Guelph family. By 1634, due to the failure of heirs among these branches, these lands were merged into the two Duchies of Brunswick (Braunschweig) and Lueneburg. In 1705 they were united under George Louis whose father, Ernest August, had been made an Elector of the Holy Roman Empire in 1692. These two duchies became known as the Electorate of Hannover. Hannover was the name of the city from which they ruled.

George Louis was the son of Ernest August of Hannover and Electress Sophia, the granddaughter of King James I of England. In 1701, England's Parliament, by the Act of Succession, provided that upon the death of Queen Anne, if she had no children, the crown of Great Britain should pass to Electress Sophia or her descendants. In 1714 Anne died, and Sophia's son, George Louis of Hannover also became King George I of Great Britain.

These Hannoverian kings included King George III against whom Americans fought the American revolution. The ancient Saxon peoples were united under one crown, but Anglo-Saxon had become English and the Hannoverian Kings of England spoke German.

In the 1800s, Hannover became a pawn in European politics between England, France, and the rising power of Prussia-Brandenburg with its center in Berlin. In the settlement of the "War of the Second Coalition" in 1803, Napoleon sought to destroy the power of the ecclesiastical states. Most of the Catholic Bishopric of Muenster was given to Prussia.

However, the area around Damme which had also been under the Bishop of Muenster was attached to the Grand Duchy of Oldenburg. The area around Osnabrueck (including Engter & Venne), in which power had constitutionally alternated between a Catholic bishop and a Protestant prince since the Treaty of Westphalia in 1648, was now incorporated into Hannover.

Napoleon invaded Hannover later in 1803, gave it to Prussia in 1805, took it back in 1806, and incorporated the western half of Hannover, including Osnabrueck and Heiligenfelde as well as all of Oldenburg, into the French Empire until 1813. In the aftermath of the War of 1812, the Grand Duchy of Oldenburg and the Kingdom of Hannover were restored and some modest reforms were made by ruling families to appease Napoleonic sentiments.

My own ancestors, the Dreyer family of Engter, like many farmers in Hannover, received their emancipation from a form of serfdom or villeinage called "Leib-Eigenthum" (literally "bodily ownership"). Their emancipation was granted by King George IV of Great Britain & Hannover in the year 1825. (Previously the Catholic bishop at Osnabrueck had been "the owner" of the Dreyers.) As a result of this action, farmer Dreyer was allowed to purchase over a 30 year period the land to which he had previously been bound.

The royal ties of Hannover to Britain were finally dissolved in the year 1837 with the arrival of Queen Victoria on the British throne. Hannoverian succession would not allow a woman to be ruler, and so the ties were broken. The first act of the new King of Hannover, Ernest August, was to abolish the parliamentary constitution. His new constitution made the legislature entirely consultative with no control over the executive. Crown lands were once again regarded as the private property of the king.

This beginning of "the Victorian era" was, of course, the same year that Huntersville Church, Penntown, and Oldenburg were founded.

IMMIGRATION TO AMERICA

By this time the German immigration to the midwest had begun in large numbers. The reasons were many, but they were more economic than political, although the repressive measures in Hannover and the failure of the Revolutions of 1848 to provide a unified and more democratic Germany were contributory factors.

Many peasants of northern Germany migrated because they were landless. By law, land passed only to the eldest, or during some periods, only to the youngest son. The others received a modest payment from the one who inherited the land, and had to work as tenants on their brother's or someone else's land. This practice was continued by will by many German immigrants in this country, but here the opportunity to buy land was much greater.

Many immigrated because of the potato famine which affected Germany as well as Ireland. The potatoes turned black with rot in the fields. Others left because of the impact of the industrial revolution in England which destroyed the cottage linen-making industry around Osnabrueck. (There probably had been a similar impact of the industrial revolution on the woolen-making cottage industry in Yorkshire, England, which may have caused the Sunman family to leave a few decades earlier.) Other families simply saw new opportunity in America.

Immigration between 1842 and 1854 was particularly heavy. Many entered at the Port of Baltimore, crossed the Alleghenies, and flatboated down the Ohio River. Others came up the Mississippi through New Orleans. Many families stopped for several years in Cincinnati before moving to southeastern Indiana.

Then came the American Civil War, and much of the immigration to this area stopped. Hermann Bruns of Sunman, born at Wachendorf in Hannover, fought for the North. His first cousin, Henry Severs, born at sea off Charleston, South Carolina, fought for the South. They visited each other after the war and became friends.

THE RISE OF PRUSSIA AND UNIFICATION OF GERMANY

In 1866, Prussia, under Otto von Bismarck, conquered Hannover in a major move to unify Germany which had been but a loose confederation of numerous separate kingdoms and principalities. Oldenburg and Hannover were both incorporated into the North German Confederation and in 1871 were made part of the German Reich.

My great-grandfather, Hermann Dreyer of Engter, was one of the very last immigrants to travel under a Hannoverian passport. By the time he arrived in America, his country had been swallowed up as a part of Prussia, and those that remained, including his younger brother Wilhelm, were pressed into Prussian military service.

Following the Franco-Prussian War in 1870-71, Prussia annexed Alsace-Lorraine as well as most of the south German states into the Ger-

man Reich. Peace reigned in Europe until 1914. However, the balance of power established in 1648 by the Peace of Westphalia and re-established at the Congress of Vienna in 1815 had been upset by a united Germany. Eventually war again engulfed Europe in 1914. After World War I came the Versailles Peace Treaty, the Great Inflation in Germany, the Great Depression, and the rise of Hitler and World War II.

Many of the immigrants' German cousins died in the two World Wars. The Ripley County names of Lampe, Henneke, Meyer, Cordes, Freuchtenicht, Neddermann, Segelke (Selke), Bose, Schroeder, Kahmeyer, Einhaus, and Kasendick all appear on the War Memorial to German dead in the churchyard at Heiligenfelde from which many of these families originated.

THE IMMIGRANTS IN AMERICA

Nevertheless, unification of Germany in 1871 initially brought pride to many Germans in both Germany and America. German was still spoken in Ripley County churches into the 1900s, although it had begun to die out with the immigrants. Catherine Ratheiser Bruns of Sunman recalled that as a girl she would attend a German service at the Evangelical Protestant Church at Penntown with her parents, but then she would run down the street to attend the English service at the Penn-town Baptist Church which she could understand.

My great-grandfathers Hermann Bruns and Hermann Dreyer both returned to Germany to visit around 1906-07. Letters from Germany were written to the Rohls family in Sunman until 1908 and to the Dreyer family until 1910. Some correspondence even resumed after World War I with a letter from the Gerkin family in Melchiorshausen near Syke to Lois Schweers in Ripley County as late as 1928.

YEARS OF AMNESIA

However, with World War I, most communication ceased forever. German was no longer taught in schools. Most churches stopped any preaching in German. Sauerkraut was renamed "victory cabbage" and Germantown, Indiana, became Pershing Post Office.

After the war, an entire history of the contribution of Ripley County citizens to the war effort was written by Minnie Wycoff. Many of those sacrifices, both here and abroad, were made by Americans of German descent. Most of the original immigrants had also died by the time of the war. The focus was now completely on America. Germany was in shambles, and with few exceptions the roots were lost or forgotten in the 20s and 30s.

With weakened German influence, German cultural and social centers faded under prohibition. In the 20s, the Ku Klux Klan emphasized

“100% Americanism”. The Klan was not unknown in these parts, and its bigotry was frequently directed against immigrants and the Catholic Church although some members were the sons of immigrants themselves. The Klan may have hurt those communities in which it was active more than the targets of its attack.

In the 30s came the rise of Hitler, and with World War II our amnesia about specific German origins nearly became complete.

The last chapter in this history will examine how we can relate to our immigrant past by rediscovering our origins overseas, re-establishing contacts with those communities, and identifying the immigrant culture and preserving its history.



**ABOVE: OUTSIDE OLD BARN-HOUSE IN NORTHERN GERMANY
BELOW: INSIDE BARN-HOUSE WITH COW STALLS IN FOREGROUND
(THE KITCHEN IN THE CENTER LEADS TO CUBBYHOLES
FOR SLEEPING IN BACK)**



ANCESTRAL HOME OF THE SELKE FAMILY,
OSTERHOLZ, HANNOVER, 1747

CHAPTER 5

RELATING TO OUR IMMIGRANT PAST

There has been a recent interest in uncovering the German roots and preserving the German heritage of the state of Indiana. A German renaissance is occurring in Indiana, particularly due to the Tricentennial of German immigration to this country: 1683 - 1983. The area around Batesville has an important contribution to make to that revival of interest.

What has been sketched in the preceding chapters about the history and culture of northern Germany can also be written in a different way about the history of other areas from which immigrants came. The immigrant past is unique and varied for each family. There is a significant Swiss settlement in this area with names like Abplanalp and Abegglen with a different story to tell. The Bigney family came to this area after several generations in Nova Scotia, having originally left Montbeliard near the Swiss border in France.

Alsatian families like the Brickas of Woerth, the Wolljungs of Geisweiler, and the Menchhofers of Kirchweiler spoke German, but were under French rule from 1681 until they immigrated to America. The Neufarth family came from Hohensulzen near Woerms in Hesse-Darmstadt with a family tradition that they were ethnically Jewish although they appeared in the Lutheran churchbooks in Hohensulzen beginning in 1749.

The Hillenbrand family came from Frankenthal in the Palatinate or Rhein Pfalz. They listed their homeland as Bavaria because the Palatinate was ruled by Bavaria after 1777. The Huber and Baas families emigrated from Obersimten and Winzeln near Pirmasens in the southern part of the Palatinate. The Palatinate was the source of much immigration to America through the years.

Some families in this vicinity, like the descendants of Rev. Daniel Palmer, an early Baptist minister, can trace their ancestors back to New England immigrants who were buried in this country before the first Germans came over 300 years ago. The tapestry of immigration to this area is rich in history and culture.

ETHNIC PAST BURIED BY DOMINANT CULTURE

The lack of a sense of place has long contributed to American rootlessness. In today's media culture, a sense of place is becoming a thing of the past. For example, most of the forefathers of the people in this area did **not** sail into New York harbor under the Statue of Liberty. It didn't exist when they came over, and more likely they came through the ports of Philadelphia, Baltimore, Charleston, and New Orleans. These events have been forgotten and need to be rediscovered to help people relate not only to their own unique past, but to the Statue of Liberty as well.

The Statue of Liberty is a symbol, but it is a symbol which many Americans have difficulty relating to because the immigration of their ancestors is no longer a part of their sense of who they are. Unfortunately, most immigrant groups have not been very successful in preserving their diverse ethnic origins and traditions in this country.

Citizens of the United States have long been familiar with the history of the English-speaking peoples. Recently, we have been made more aware of the history of other ethnic groups. The television series "Roots" was such a powerful tale because it uncovered a family history which had been so deeply buried by American culture.

The German heritage is also deeply buried owing in part to two World Wars with Germany, the domination of the English language, and the necessity of emphasizing the English and French origins of the political ideas in this country. Consequently, despite a huge German immigration, many people of German descent are not particularly aware of their German origins and heritage.

This lack of awareness is particularly true of the heritage of northern Germany where many of the families of the Batesville vicinity originated. The Germany most frequently portrayed for tourists is the Black Forest in Baden, the Alpine regions of Bavaria, and the Rhine with its castles.

Much of the work in identifying the north German culture in Indiana has just begun. One such example is "Brought, Borrowed, or Bought" by Gary Stanton, a folklorist who wrote his doctoral dissertation on the material culture brought from Germany to Ray and Butler townships in Franklin County. Copies are in the Batesville and Brookville public libraries.

County and local histories for the most part neglected to record precise origins. For many years those origins were obvious and well-known. Later they were ignored or forgotten. Today regional origins

may be found in the census or sometimes in county histories and atlases. However, specific villages can usually be found only in church records, family papers and histories, U.S. immigration and naturalization records, or by long and difficult searches through emigration records in Germany.

REDISCOVERY OF GERMAN ORIGINS

In 1978 and 1979, Richard Theilig, a German immigrant, translated the Adams Churchbook from old German "handschrift" into typed English. Before that time, many Adams Church families did not know the names of the villages where their ancestors came from in Germany. Now we can pinpoint the exact location of the village of origin of some 150 immigrants to Adams Township. That churchbook revealed that many had come from the single village of Wachendorf and attended church at Heiligenfelde one mile away.

Likewise, Mr. Theilig's translation of the Huntersville churchbook reveals that many families in the Batesville area came from the Engter-Bramsche-Venne vicinity just north of Osnabrueck. The Hubble's churchbook reveals a variety of places of origin for the families of that church. Other churchbooks remain to be examined, translated, and studied for more information.

RE-ESTABLISHING LINKS WITH GERMANY

As a result of the translation of the churchbooks, contacts are being re-established with communities in Germany. In 1985, I traveled to Heiligenfelde, Germany, presented a copy of the Adams Churchbook to the Pastor, and gave an interview to the local German newspaper about the origins of Ripley County immigrants in the Wachendorf-Heiligenfelde area. I tried to meet relatives of several Adams Church families and returned copies of letters to one lady that had been written by her great aunt 75 years earlier. She in turn gave me a photograph of Sophie Rohls at her home south of Sunman.

I also traveled to Engter, the home of some early Huntersville families, to find my own third cousins, the Dreyers, still living on the old homestead built by my great-great-grandfather. Our families had not communicated for 75 years, yet we both had photographs of each other's grandparents taken at the turn of the century.

In 1986, Professor Antonius Holtmann of the Emigration Institute at the University of Oldenburg, Germany, came to visit both Oldenburg and Huntersville, Indiana, for a large-scale project evaluating German letters, documents, and church records. He too is interested in linking the communities and families on both sides of the Atlantic. Detlef Goldmann of Heiligenfelde whom I met on my visit to Germany also came to visit Adams Church in November of 1986.

Phyllis Bergman Rhodes, a descendant of the Behlmer and Selke families, recently traveled to the Heiligenfelde-Barien area to meet her

4th cousins, the Segelkes. Keith Selke of Indianapolis had provided the research which re-established these family ties. A few families may have maintained some contact with their roots in Germany through the years since immigration.

This is potentially just the beginning of further communication, information, and exchanges for both sides of the Atlantic. We have much in common, and have had over a long period of time.

IDENTIFYING THE IMMIGRANT CULTURE

Some of the oldest human questions are "Who are we?" "Where did we come from?" "Why do we behave as we do?" "Where did we get our ideas?" Partial answers to these questions are to be found in the homelands of our ancestors.

There are places and communities back in Germany and elsewhere where our forefathers lived that still exist. Although times have changed, they still eat some of the same food our forefathers ate, live in the old ancestral homes modified from the original barn-houses, use and cherish some of the old furniture, cultivate their fields meticulously, and plant flowers everywhere. Some still even intermarry among the same families that have also intermarried over here.

Today, the standard of living in Germany is much like our own. Immigration has virtually ceased. The years of conflict are beginning to fade from living memory. The people of those communities would also like to know more about the descendants of those who left Germany in hopes of finding something better. They certainly must wonder how our lives are different from theirs as a result.

SHARING INFORMATION ABOUT OUR PAST BOTH HERE AND ABROAD

During this sesquicentennial year for Huntersville, Oldenburg, and Penntown, Batesville area residents can research their own immigrant origins and try to make contacts with churches, families, and towns back in Germany and elsewhere. The celebration this year is not limited to a particular group, but it is a celebration of, and for, the entire Batesville-Oldenburg-Penntown vicinity.

Furthermore, the groups which left Damme, Venne and Heiligenfelde did not just come to Oldenburg, Huntersville and Adams Church. Protestant families from the vicinity of Venne also settled in Jackson and Bartholomew counties as an examination of churchbooks at Borchers', Sauer's and White Creek Lutheran Churches near Seymour and Columbus will reveal. Catholic families from the Damme vicinity not only settled Oldenburg, Indiana, but also Minster, Ohio.

Much more research is needed, not only into the origins of northern and southern Germans who came to this area, but also into the origins of the early English, New Englanders, and Pennsylvanians who came here over 150 years ago, and the settlers of Irish descent who have continued to arrive from the south and elsewhere. Your county's historical society can often help you get started.

The Batesville Public Library is seeking materials for its family history section. Presently, the library has family histories of the Sar-ringhaus, Selke, Hickman, Bauman, and Kassens families, among others. The Ripley County Historical Society and the Osgood Public Library have many more. Each of these histories adds to our understanding of the origins of Batesville area families.

There is a vast quantity of old letters, obituaries and remembrance cards in this vicinity, often found in attics, family Bibles and "places for safe-keeping". They need to be copied, translated and made available to others. The Batesville Public Library is the logical repository for copies of these materials, family trees and written histories of families in Laughery, Adams and Ray townships, as well as the surrounding area. Your contribution of copies of these materials to the library is encouraged.

The celebrations of the sesquicentennials of Oldenburg on July 2, 3 and 4 and Huntersville on July 24, 25 and 26 are important milestones. It is hoped that in the future more visits and exchanges will take place both here and abroad. Some members of Huntersville church will be joining others from Jackson and Bartholomew counties in making the trip to Venne for their 900th anniversary celebration on August 20 - 23.

Through these events and activities the long lost ties with the ancestral origins of the Batesville area communities will gradually be re-established.

If you would like more information about the immigration, please write to David S. Dreyer, 4010 North Park Avenue, Indianapolis, Indiana 46205.



**THE AUTHOR (LEFT) AND HIS 3RD COUSINS NEAR ENGTER, GERMANY
(IN FRONT OF THE HOME BUILT BY THEIR
GREAT-GREAT GRANDFATHER DREYER)**



**HOLY FAMILY CHURCH
OLDENBURG, INDIANA**



**ST. AUGUSTINE CHURCH
MINSTER, OHIO**

**CHURCHES FOUNDED BY IMMIGRANTS FROM
DAMME PARISH, OLDENBURG, GERMANY**

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