

## Great Grandparents of ... Jean Cammon Findlay

Contact Jean at: gfindlay@centurytel.net

### Hans Olson Kammen

Date of Birth: 2 February 1839  
Place of Birth: Leikanger, Sogn og Fjordane, Norway  
Marriage 1: 20 November 1864, Daleyville,  
Dane County, Wisconsin  
(Ingeborg Levordsdatter Lien)  
Marriage 2: 20 September 1871, Eureka,  
Dakota County, Minnesota  
(Bertha Hansdatter Odden)  
Marriage 3: 12 November 1882, Dakota Territory  
(Inger Marie Johnson Visnes)  
Date of Death: 6 September 1908  
Place of Death: McNeil Island, Pierce County,  
Washington

### Bertha Hansdatter Odden

Date of Birth: 29 October 1847  
Place of Birth: Sør-Aurdal, Oppland, Norway  
Date of Death: 7 July 1880  
Place of Death: near Farmington, Richland County,  
Dakota Territory

### Bengt Johnson

Date of Birth: 25 September 1836  
Place of Birth: Vegatorp, Halland, Sweden  
Marriage: 25 July 1879, Lindsborg,  
McPherson County, Kansas  
Date of Death: 14 June 1917  
Place of Death: Anderson Island, Pierce County,  
Washington

### Anna Nelson

Date of Birth: 5 May 1856  
Place of Birth: Enö, Kristianstad, Sweden  
Date of Death: 1939  
Place of Death: Anderson Island, Pierce County,  
Washington

### Abraham Severin Tonnessen

Date of Birth: 14 June 1829  
Place of Birth: Norway  
Marriage: 1854, Norway  
Date of Death: 1901  
Place of Death: Norway

### Olene Joachime Christensen

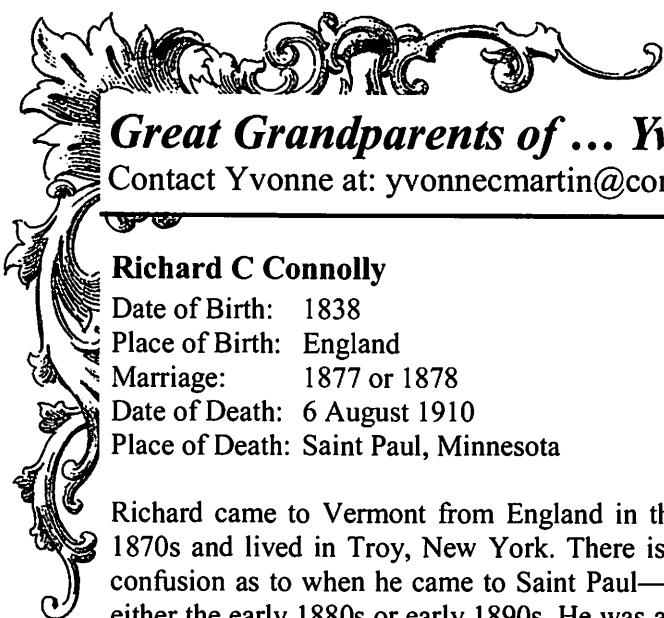
Date of Birth: 23 March 1833  
Place of Birth: Norway  
Date of Death: 1870  
Place of Death: Norway

### Christian Frederick Christensen

Date of Birth: 8 February 1841  
Place of Birth: Assens, Fyn, Denmark  
Marriage: 7 February 1872, Steilacoom,  
Pierce County, Washington  
Date of death: 1 May 1887  
Place of death: Anderson Island, Pierce County,  
Washington

### Helda Marie Cardel

Date of Birth: 17 July 1853  
Place of Birth: Assens, Fyn, Denmark  
Marriage 1: 7 February 1872, Steilacoom,  
Pierce County, Washington  
(Christian Frederick Christensen)  
Marriage 2: 1889, Pierce County, Washington  
(August W. Lindstrom)  
Date of Death: 10 May 1933  
Place of Death: Anderson Island, Pierce County,  
Washington



## ***Great Grandparents of ... Yvonne Connolly Martin***

Contact Yvonne at: yvonnecmartin@comcast.net, or 2230 Chestnut St., Waukegan, IL 60087

---

### **Richard C Connolly**

Date of Birth: 1838  
Place of Birth: England  
Marriage: 1877 or 1878  
Date of Death: 6 August 1910  
Place of Death: Saint Paul, Minnesota

Richard came to Vermont from England in the late 1870s and lived in Troy, New York. There is some confusion as to when he came to Saint Paul—it was either the early 1880s or early 1890s. He was a shoemaker who had several shops in Saint Paul. Although family folklore is that Connolly was not their original name, I have a dozen or so receipts of money that he and his brother Thomas sent to Anne Connolly of Loughborough, Leicester, England, between the years 1873 and 1875. This has become a proverbial dead-end. Family folklore says that the move to Saint Paul was under some sort of duress. I believe that because there is no evidence of communication with brother Thomas after the move.

### **C(K)atherine Rose (Leigdon) Lyden**

Date of Birth: July 1847  
Place of Birth: Perth, Ontario, Canada  
Date of Death: 24 January 1932  
Place of Death: White Bear Lake, Minnesota

Catherine was claimed to be a bitter old lady. She would live with my grandfather and grandmother for a while until she was well fed and healthy, then move out on her own without telling them where she was. One cousin has evidence that she actually died in the asylum at Saint Peter. After her husband's death, she supported herself as a laundress. Her specialty was ironing the fancy blouses and collars that the ladies wore in those days.

Catherine and Richard had only the one child. Why was he born in Vermont when they lived in New York?

### **Alphonse Farrell**

Date of Birth: 28 February 1848  
Place of Birth: near Montreal, Canada  
Marriage: 14 December 1870  
Date of Death: 29 June 1927  
Place of Death: Saint Paul, Minnesota

Living in Saint Paul all their married life, Alphonse was involved in several businesses. He had a grocery store, a shoemaker shop, and employed several peddlers who bought vegetables and fruit at the Saint Paul Farmer's Market and sold them from wagons in the residential areas. He also is said to have sold fish from the Mississippi River and also horses. They lived for a while on Rondo Street and then on Saint Lawrence Street. Their church was Saint Louis. He is rumored to have offered Lucille Connolly \$100 when she was 18 if she would convert to Catholicism. Their 50th anniversary was celebrated 18 January 1921 at North Central Commercial Club, University and Park avenues in Saint Paul.

### **Marie Celnia Morissette**

Date of Birth: 29 September 1847  
Place of Birth: Little Canada, Minnesota  
Date of Death: 19 July 1931  
Place of Death: Saint Paul, Minnesota

Supposedly she was the first white girl to be born in Ramsey County. A note in the Saint Paul paper when she died read: "Woman, 84, who saw St. Paul 'Grow Up,' Dies."

A woman who saw a city of 271,000 grow up from the raw wilderness in her 84-year span of life died here Sunday. She was Mrs. Mary Farrell, widow of Alphonse Farrell. ... She was born in 1847 in the Little Canada settlement north of where St. Paul now stands, the daughter of John and Henrietta Morissette, French-Canadian settlers. Later she came to St. Paul and ... had lived here ever since. Funeral services will be held at ... 9 A. M. at St. Louis French Church, Tenth and Cedar Streets, which Mrs. Farrell had attended since it was built.

Alphonse and Marie had eight children, six of whom lived to adulthood: Marie Sophie (Renaud?), Charles,

Louis, Francois, Angelique (Connolly), and Virginia (Poirier).

---

**Thomas Aitken**

Date of Birth: 4 February 1845  
Place of Birth: Collessie, Fife, Scotland  
Marriage: 24 May 1866  
Date of Death: 1894  
Place of Death: Olivia, Minnesota

**Janet Fairbairn**

Date of Birth: 11 November 1842  
Place of Birth: Edinburgh, Scotland  
Date of Death: 14 October 1916  
Place of Death: Winnebago, Minnesota

Thomas and Janet came to the United States in approximately 1883 to live in Minneapolis or Olivia. Thomas was a masonry journeyman and, when he died, he left Janet with several children.

My grandfather, with his twin brother David, was the youngest at age 13. Their children were all born in Scotland: James, John, Agnes (Dunsmore), Janet, Thomas, Magdelene/Margaret (Meacham), Jean (Waldo), Jessie (Ness), David, and William.

**Vaclav (Venel) Novy**

Date of Birth: 13 May 1850  
Place of Birth: Bohemia  
Marriage: date and place currently not known  
Date of Death: 16 May 1910  
Place of Death: Wilton, North Dakota

**Elizabeth Kellner**

Date of Birth: 9 February 1851  
Place of Birth: Prague, Bohemia  
Date of Death: 17 April 1932  
Place of Death: Hinckley, Minnesota

Venel and Elizabeth came to the United States in 1888 to Two Rivers, Wisconsin, and settled in Minneapolis in 1889. In 1896 they moved to Olivia and, finally, in 1907 to Wing, North Dakota. They had eight children, all of whom lived to adulthood: Vaclav/James, John, Anna (Horejsi), Josephine Helen (Aitken), Mary/Mayme (Slavik), Louis, Joseph, Elizabeth/Lall (Sperry).

A Czech friend of mine took their information to Prague on a visit home and tried to hire university professors who needed the money to search for their parents or marriage date. The report was that the name was too common to be of any use.

## *Great Grandparents of ... Madge Wasgatt Pedersen*

Contact Madge at: [macgrads@aol.com](mailto:macgrads@aol.com)

---



### **John Adams Armstrong**

Date of Birth: 7 August 1832  
Place of Birth: Lisbon, New York  
Marriage: 15 April 1851  
Date of Death: 30 January 1917  
Place of Death: Winnebago, Minnesota

John and Laura moved with their families in 1845 to Waukesha County, Wisconsin, probably living in Mukwanago, because several of their children were born there. John and Laura had several children before moving to Nashville Township, in Martin County, Minnesota, in 1864.

Laura's father and grandfather moved to Minnesota with them. The latter was a veteran of the War of 1812!

The family farmed and eventually had ten children. Moving to Fairmont, John became the auditor of Martin County and was elected to the state legislature



Photos courtesy of the author

### **Laura Valeria Hollenbeck (Hollembach)**

Date of Birth: 23 October 1828  
Place of birth: Canton, New York  
Date of Death: 9 April 1907  
Place of Death: Winnebago, Minnesota

in 1882. He moved his family to North Dakota for six years, starting in 1883 or 1884, then moved back to Winnebago City (as it was called then), was elected city recorder, and served as superintendent of the electric light and water works plant. He was most proud of his dark chestnut horse, Nutoroy, one of the fastest horses in southern Minnesota.

Early in 1861, he and a brother went to Nevada and California looking for gold and silver. I have touching letters that he wrote to his wife and children from the West but I don't think he struck it rich!

**David Perry Wasgatt**

Date of Birth: 6 April 1831  
Place of birth: Mount Desert Island, Maine  
Marriage: 20 May 1855  
Date of Death: 16 September 1894  
Place of Death: Winnebago, Minnesota

**Sophia Winter Richardson**

Date of Birth: April 1836  
Place of Birth: Mount Desert Island, Maine  
Date of Death: 19 November 1908  
Place of Death: Winnebago, Minnesota

David spent his early life on his father's farm and attended public school, eventually teaching school for several years. He worked in a shipyard, engaged in merchandising, and represented his county in the state legislature. He was also employed by the Prohibitionists as a marshal to uphold the liquor laws.

The family's story tells us they left Maine because of losing many family members to the sea. When they moved to Winnebago in 1871, they had three sons; a daughter was born later.

In Minnesota, he became a justice of the peace, spent two terms on the school board, and was a founding member of the Winnebago Building and Loan Association. He was active in the Presbyterian Church.

**Joshua Lewis Chilton**

Date of Birth: 2 July 1811  
Place of Birth: Culpepper, Virginia  
Marriage 1: 23 November 1836 to Martha Freeman  
Marriage 2: 1858 to Caroline (Dyer?)  
Date of Death: 1889  
Place of Death: Bryantsville, Indiana

**Martha Ellin Freeman**

Date of Birth: 18 April 1820  
Place of Birth: Bedford, Virginia  
Date of Death: 1857  
Place of Burial: Albany, Kentucky

**Caroline (Dyer?)**

Place of Death: Bryantsville, Indiana

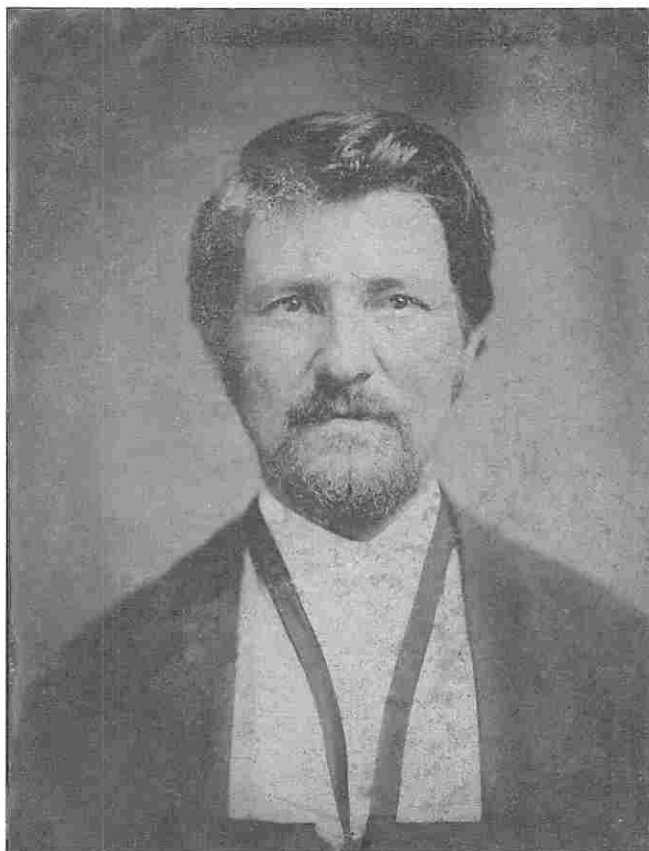
As a teenager, Joshua went to Maryland for two years to work on his grandfather's plantation. There were twenty slaves on this plantation. From a family Bible, the story is written that Joshua met pretty Martha Ellin who "captivated him with her black eyes and silvery song." Her parents objected because their daughter was only 15 years old. They eloped and were married in Caswell County, North Carolina, accompanied by brothers and sisters.

In 1838 or 1839, the couple moved west with one of Joshua's brothers and wife. Missouri was their target but they stopped in southern Kentucky. They are listed in the Clinton County 1850 census with five children; a sixth was born five years later. Martha Ellin died in 1857 of "the flux," leaving Joshua with young children. He married Caroline (Dyer?) and five years later moved his family to Bryantsville, Indiana. (The area of southern Kentucky was a hotbed of Northern and Southern sympathizers during the Civil War.)

Joshua is buried in a small rural cemetery, along with his second wife, Caroline, and a daughter, Eliza, who never married. Martha Ellin is buried outside of Albany, Kentucky, all by herself.

### George Albert Tromly

Date of Birth: 22 December 1841  
Place of Birth: Mount Vernon, Illinois  
Marriage: 8 November 1866  
Date of Death: 1 November 1922  
Place of Death: Fairfield, Illinois



According to writings about George, he began "taking care of himself at age 15." Starting in 1858, he made trips to Texas and Missouri, clerking and working as a farm hand. In 1860 he returned to Illinois, and in 1861 enlisted in the army. He spent the next four years with an Illinois infantry division during which he experienced an early foray in Missouri with General Grant; the siege of Corinth, Mississippi; the engagement at Murfreesboro, Tennessee; the battle of Chicamauga; the battles of Reseca (where "they had a high old time"), Dallas, and New Hope, Georgia. Late in 1864 his division returned to Springfield, Illinois. He had been wounded twice; one musket ball skimmed his head.

### Samantha A. Hays

Date of Birth: 30 April 1848  
Place of Birth: Bridgeport, Illinois  
Date of Death: 23 May 1924  
Place of Death: Fairfield, Illinois



Photos courtesy of the author

Returning to Mount Vernon, he worked in the family jewelry business and met and married Samantha Hays in Bridgeport. After several more moves they finally settled in Fairfield, where he opened his own jewelry shop. His store letterhead listed his business as silversmith and gunsmith.

Six children were born to them and, in 1916, they celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary with an open house.



## ***Great Grandparents of ... Joan Keetley***

Contact Joan at: joankeetley@yahoo.com

---

### **James Frank Keetley**

Date of Birth: 7 December 1827  
Place of Birth: Lincoln St. John in Newport, Links  
[Lincolnshire] County, England  
Marriage: 18 October 1869  
Date of Death: 8 May 1900  
Place of Death: Marshan Township, Dakota  
County, Minnesota

### **Frances (Fanny) Tyner**

Date of Birth: 1853  
Place of Birth: New York State  
Date of Death: 2 September 1882  
Place of Death: Marshan Township, Dakota County,  
Minnesota

James and Frances, his second wife, were married in Douglas Township, Dakota County. She was the daughter of John Tyner and Mary Kingston. James was a fairly successful farmer in Dakota County.

---

### **Lewis Poor**

Date of Birth: 23 August, 1856  
Place of Birth: Rome, Bradford County,  
Pennsylvania  
Marriage: 31 December 1883  
Date of Death: 14 November 1924  
Place of Death: Hastings, Dakota County, Minnesota

### **Etta Charlotte Owen**

Date of Birth: 26 October, 1866  
Place of Birth: Marshan Township, Dakota County,  
Minnesota  
Date of Death: 12 October 1942  
Place of Death: Farmington, Dakota County,  
Minnesota

Lewis and Etta were married at the home of Etta's parents, Apollos Owen and Nancy Abbe Lee, in Hastings, Minnesota. Lewis was a farmer in Marshan Township, about a half mile from the James Frank Keetley farm. Great Grandma Etta was the only great grandparent whom Joan knew in life. She stayed at my parent's home in Hastings for a time. She did lovely needlework, her specialty being bed linens—pillow cases, coverlets, and shams. She also embroidered on dish towels and pot-holders, aprons, and

dressess. Our stairway had no railing, so she climbed the steps on all fours! I don't recall how she descended.

---

### **Sven Olsson**

Date of Birth: 6 May 1824  
Place of Birth: #6 Skepparslöv, Skepparslöv parish,  
Kristianstad län (county), Sweden  
Marriage: 12 December 1851  
#14 Önnestad, Önnestad parish,  
Kristianstad län (county), Sweden  
Date of Death: 11 May 1901  
Place of Death: #11 Skepparslöv, Skepparslöv parish,  
Kristianstad län (county), Sweden

### **Kjerstina Svensdotter**

Date of Birth: 28 January 1825  
Place of Birth: #14 Önnestad, Önnestad parish,  
Kristianstad län (county), Sweden  
Date of Death: 8 June 1912  
Place of Death: #11 Skepparslöv, Skepparslöv parish,  
Kristianstad län (county), Sweden

Sven was a tenant farmer.

---

### **Per Olsson**

Date of Birth: 12 August 1827  
Place of Birth: #12 Tosteberga, Trolle-Ljungby parish,  
Kristianstad län (county), Sweden  
Marriage: 30 November 1855  
Date of Death: 29 March 1904  
Place of Death: #2 Vanneberga, Trolle-Ljungby parish,  
Kristianstad län (county), Sweden

### **Anna Persdotter**

Date of Birth: 11 April 1836  
Place of Birth: #17 Vanneberga, Trolle-Ljungby parish,  
Kristianstad län (county), Sweden  
Date of Death: 5 July 1907  
Place of Death: #17 Vanneberga, Trolle-Ljungby parish,  
Kristianstad län (county), Sweden

Per and Anna were married in Vanneberga, Trolle-Ljungby parish, Kristianstad län, which is now part of Skåne. Per was a census-taker in the Trolle-Ljungby area. Joan's mother was baptized Anna Margarete and added Kjerstin at her confirmation.

## Great Grandparents of ... Deane Dierksen

Contact Deane at: [d.dierksen@verizon.net](mailto:d.dierksen@verizon.net)

### Alfred Eugene Sturges

Date of Birth: 24 February 1862  
Place of Birth: Buffalo, Wright County, Minnesota  
Marriage: 6 June 1882  
Date of Death: 8 July 1956  
Place of Death: Buffalo, Minnesota

### Adelaide Covart

Date of Birth: 4 October 1859  
Place of Birth: Cannon City, Rice County, Minnesota  
Date of Death: 25 September 1935  
Place of Death: Buffalo, Minnesota

Alfred Sturges and Adelaide Covart, great grandparents on my mother's side, were children of early pioneers in Wright County, Minnesota. They lived almost their entire lives in Wright County where they were fortunate enough to grow up with their parents and other relatives nearby.

Alfred Eugene Sturges was born in Buffalo, Wright County, the elder son of James Sturges (1833-1926) and Ellen Amanda Dudley (1840-1910). He was called Fred, but usually used his initials, A. E., in business and written materials.

Adelaide Covart, or Addie as she was called, was born in Cannon City, Rice County, Minnesota. Her parents, George R. Covart (1837-1908) and Eliza Leonard (1839-1924) had moved to a farm a few miles north of Buffalo by the time the census was taken in June 1860. Addie spent most of the rest of her life in Buffalo.

Fred and Addie were married in 1882<sup>1</sup> and had four children<sup>2</sup>:

- Bessie Ellen Sturges (1885-1971), who married Royal Jasper Moulton and lived in Minnesota and the Dakotas during her married life. After her husband's death she retired to Buffalo. Bessie is the author's maternal grandmother.
- Paul Eugene Sturges (1889-1963), who married Ruie Marcella Olson.
- Chester James Sturges (1896-1944), who became a physician and married Lillyan Thompson.
- Myra Eliza Sturges (1898-1991), who married Ray James Little and was the only one of the four children who remained in Buffalo throughout her life. She took care of her parents in their older age and ill health.

Not many details of Addie's life have survived unless one considers her husband's activities to have involved both of them. Like many women of her time, Addie no doubt focused her attention on her home and family, and does not seem to have joined any local organizations except the Presbyterian Church and the Order of the Eastern Star. This may have been due to ill health—she was said to have been a semi-invalid for many years before her



*Adelaide and Alfred's Wedding Photo, 1882*

Courtesy of the author

<sup>1</sup> Sturges-Covart marriage, 6 June 1882. Certified transcription of marriage record, dated 21 March 2000, from County Auditor/Treasurer, Wright County, Minnesota. It notes that the marriage is recorded in Marriage Record D, p. 221.

<sup>2</sup> A. E. Sturges, "Historic Memories." (pamphlet printed on four small pages, ca late 1940s). Copy in possession of the author. Lists names and birth dates for all the children.



death. Her younger daughter Myra recalled a Mrs. Lowe as her second mother because of her own mother's poor health.<sup>3</sup>

Addie died at home in 1935<sup>4</sup>. In her obituary, partly if not entirely written by Fred, she was described as:

a typical home woman. In an age when the home appears to be slighted for outside activities, here was a woman who regarded the home as the most important place in life; and who felt that a woman's first trust is to her family. In caring for that trust she felt it necessary first of all to anchor the family life to the sentiments and romance and duties of home. Take care of the home life and the home influence will always take care of the family, was her motto of service and sacrifice for those she loved. Such sentiment must be the rock upon warmth [*sic*] [on which] all the finer things of life are built. Today, loved ones in that home feel all the more the void that is made at her departure.<sup>5</sup>

Details of Fred's life are easier to come by. He was too young to remember the first notable event after his birth: in 1863, when Indians were reported nearby and local citizens panicked over the possibility of an Indian uprising, his mother carried him ten miles to the safety of a log stockade in Monticello. A good part of the rest of his life story comes from his own pen in his undated pamphlet, *Historic Memories*,<sup>6</sup> probably written soon after the death of his son Chester in 1944.

My earliest recollections are of my uncle Lewis [Sturges] killing a hive of bees to get the honey. This was accomplished by digging a little hole in the ground and sticking a stake in the center of it. A small amount of sulphur [*sic*] was wrapped in a cotton rag tied to the top of the stake. This was lighted, and the box containing the bees was placed over it. I could not have been more than four years old at the time.

My next item of early memory was my father's severe illness on his return from the Civil War.

My grandparents lived just south of the present Pure Oil station. The old Taylor House containing the post office was on the corner just in front of the present Lakeview Motors garage. Mr. Taylor had a flock of domesticated wild geese. The ganders were very cross to any young children, making it quite an adventure to go to see my grandparents, since sling shots had not yet been invented.

Now we arrive at the school age. The old log school house stood on the side of the hill near where Willard Peterson's garage now stands. It consisted of one room with a board seat running around three sides of the wall with a box stove in the center of the room. A chair and a small table were provided for the teacher. For desks the children had a board in front of their seats on which to rest their slates and books. Discipline was enforced by a dunce cap, standing on the floor and by switch.

The birth of [my brother] James D. Sturges on Feb. 19, 1868, was a

<sup>3</sup> Connie Little, Untitled three-page manuscript, dated 12 February 1976, in the Sturges folder at the Wright County Historical Society, Buffalo, Minnesota. Connie was married to James Little, Myra's older son, and lived in Buffalo.

<sup>4</sup> Adelaide Sturges death certificate no. 1935-MN-017341. Minnesota Department of Health, Division of Vital Statistics, Saint Paul.

<sup>5</sup> "Mrs. Sturges, Early Pioneer, Laid to Rest," *Wright County Journal-Press* (Buffalo, Minn.), 3 October 1935, p. 1. She was identified only as Mrs. Sturges or Mrs. A. E. Sturges.

<sup>6</sup> A.E. Sturges, "Historic Memories" (pamphlet printed on four small pages, ca late 1940s). Copy in possession of the author.

very important happening at our house. I can still see the old lady (Mrs. Washburn) as she looked when she showed the little chap to me and told how she had found it in a hollow log between their place (which was a half a mile west of town) and here. I soon began making plans of how I could get the most work out of him. These plans never worked out. We grew up as children do, and when Jim was old enough to go to school, it was a frame one-room building, which stood where the Swedish Mission church is now. Here we received our entire schooling. As boys, we availed ourselves of every chance to earn a nickel. We were encouraged by our parents, who offered us good advice and even delayed their own work to allow us a chance. They never took or used our earnings themselves.

We were among the moderately thrifty class. We always had plenty of plain, wholesome, well-cooked food. My mother made our clothes and patched them as they wore thru. However, two rugged boys sometimes overworked her. Once I remember a more fortunate matron calling to me from her doorway to look out or the rag man would catch me. Such cuts made deep impressions on young minds, and we were coun-  
[sic] ciled to avoid them.

I remember my first store pants. How proud I was and how the boys laughed when I told my teacher she would not know me in the afternoon, for I was going to wear my new pants.

I saw my mother make coffee from burnt wheat or bread crusts when our supply was out.

As we grew up, [my brother] Jim leaned to farm life, and I craved the mercantile calling.

My father hired extra help for himself in order to let me accept a position in the C. E. Oakley store. The latter was a noble character and a successful merchant from 1881-1883. I had to quit store life in 1883 for a time because of a goiter.

On June 6, 1882, I was married to Adelaide Covart and [we] began our housekeeping in rooms over Oakley's store.

Fred and Addie were married at her parents' home after which they left for a "tour to the [Twin] Cities." The article in the paper<sup>7</sup> mostly listed the presents the bridal couple received and who gave them, such items as a large Bible from the groom's parents, a rocking chair from his brother, and an assortment of linens, towels, flatware, and the like. They also received two castors, fancy silver plate and glass serving pieces used on the dinner tables of upper class Victorians (and perhaps those who aspired to some gentility!) and popular in this period.



*Sturges Family, ca. 1903*  
Rear: Alfred, Paul, Bess  
Front: Myra, Chester, Addie

Courtesy of the author

<sup>7</sup> "Married. Sturges-Covart," *Howard Lake Herald* (Howard Lake, Minn.), 15 June 1882, page 4, column 3.

Fred went on to say:

Early in 1883 my wife and I hired out to work on a farm in Traverse county [Minnesota] [where Addie's older brother George had already settled] for \$26 a month—\$6 a month for her for cooking and \$20 a month to me for farm work. As was the custom then, we received no pay until after the harvest and threshing in the fall.

With that season's wages and about \$300 assistance from my father and about the same amount previously saved from my wages as a clerk, we bought two and 8/100 acres of land. We built our own house there and lived there for over 50 years.

From early in 1884, I worked at carpenter work, worked in the county treasurer's office as extra help for a few weeks. On Oct. 20, 1887, I was appointed railway postal clerk between Chicago, Ill., and St. Paul, Minn. Nine months of the time I was in the mail service I lived in McGregor, Iowa.

After retiring from the mail service, I persuaded my father to build a store building on lot 10 of block 66 in Buffalo, where I went into the grocery business on capital borrowed at 9 per cent. After being a grocer for 18 years, I sold my business in June 1907.

During that time I had invested my surplus money in land and then I began to improve what was afterwards to be known as [the] Sturges Park addition to Buffalo. I built the pavilion and ran it for a number of years before selling it to the Fransen memorial association in 1917. I began building houses to rent, working at painting much of the time. I platted Sturges park addition on Dec. 13, 1916, and bought, wrecked and converted into dwellings the house where I was born, Shimmins Drug store and the Dudley opera house.

Fred was obviously an industrious man who had a varied career. In addition to the work he mentioned himself, he was an agent for the Springfield Fire and Marine Insurance Company for over 60 years.<sup>8</sup> In 1910 he was the census enumerator.<sup>9</sup> In both the 1910 and 1920 censuses his occupation was listed as farmer.<sup>10</sup> In 1915 he was the assessor for Buffalo Township and Village<sup>11</sup> and that same year he was a member of the fire department.<sup>12</sup>

His pavilion in Sturges Park, adjacent to the family home, was in a five-acre recreational facility that he opened in June 1903 and rented out for public gatherings.<sup>13</sup> It was advertised as the "ideal place for Society, Lodge, Church or Family picnics with accommodations for any number up to 5000." It was located "less than a mile from the Soo depot" in Buffalo so it was an easy trip by trolley from Minneapolis, 37 miles away. Fred described it in the following terms:

Plenty of shade, plenty of grass, plenty of pure spring water, plenty of lake shore, plenty of room, and plenty of tables. A fine ball ground where people can sit in the shade and see the game. A large pavilion with good floor for dancing, refreshments stands, check rooms, substantial swings, and in fact every advantage and attraction that can be asked for or expected. Buffalo Lake boasts of its fine fishing and

<sup>8</sup> "Last Rites for A. E. Sturges," *Wright County Journal-Press* (Buffalo, Minn.), 19 July 1956, p. 1. Also, "The 'Good Old Days' Are Here Again," *Minneapolis Sunday Tribune* (Minneapolis, Minn.), 22 February 1953, p. 8. [The section may be UM, as that is in the dateline just before the date]. This is a series of three photographs with a caption, and has a photograph of Fred Sturges misidentified as the person on the right instead of the person on the left. It starts out: "Times have changed since the Washington Birthday association of Delano, Minnesota, began holding meetings in Wright county 80 years ago." About Fred, it said: "Fred Sturgess, 92, Buffalo, Minn., insurance salesman, will receive the annual plaque given by the association to the oldest member."

<sup>9</sup> Alfred E. Sturges household, 1910 U. S. Census, population schedule, Minnesota, Wright County, Buffalo Village, ED 201, sheet 6B, line 32, numbers not given for dwelling and family, National Archives Microfilm Publication T624, roll 728. Alfred E. Sturges was the enumerator.

<sup>10</sup> Fred Sturges household, 1920 U. S. Census, population schedule, Minnesota, Wright County, Buffalo Village, ED 84, SD 10, dwelling 222, family 237, line 30, National Archives Microfilm Publication, T625-867.

<sup>11</sup> Franklin Curtiss-Wedge, *History of Wright County, Minnesota* (1915; reprint edition, 1977, sponsored by the Wright County Historical Society with the support of the Wright County Commissioners), p. 953.

<sup>12</sup> Marcia Paulsen, *Buffalo: From Trading Post to Star City: A Centennial History of Buffalo, 1850-1987* (Sponsored by The Buffalo Centennial Committee, Marcia Paulsen, 1987) p. 17.

<sup>13</sup> Paulsen, p. 12.

beautiful shore. Get your friends together, take a day's outing, and make life worth living, go where you have all the essential requirements of a day's pleasure on the grounds, thus enabling all to enjoy the full programme.<sup>14</sup>

What you couldn't do there was "misbehave," fight, or drink alcohol. Fred was firmly pro-temperance, following, as he said, his parents' example. Dances were held on Saturdays but not on Sundays as he disapproved of dancing and card playing on Sundays. According to grandson Ray Little, Fred stood at the door of the pavilion with a stick or club to prevent people from sneaking in alcohol.<sup>15</sup>

Fred was also quite strict with his children. As quite an old lady, his daughter Bess remembered getting caught and punished when she skipped a Sunday night church youth group meeting to play cards.<sup>16</sup> Bess and brother Paul were forbidden to part their hair in the middle—considered fast behavior then—but would do just that on their way to social functions, and carefully restore their hairdos on the way home!<sup>17</sup> Bess also related her father's reaction when, after graduating from high school and expecting to go off to school, she took and passed the teacher's exam just to show she could do it. The result was that her father then made her teach for two years before

sending her to Duluth Normal School.<sup>18</sup>

When he ran for the Minnesota State Legislature in 1926, Fred shared his political ideas with prospective voters. His ad,<sup>19</sup> addressed "To The Voters and Taxpayers of Wright Co.," noted that the "man in moderate circumstances is bearing more than his just share of the public burden." He wanted to send "the absconding treasurer, the bank wrecker, the high class forger and the high toned crook," when convicted, to the "twine mills<sup>20</sup> or other heavy manual labor ... [to] serve their years of imprisonment learning the meaning of honest toil." He came in third out of four candidates in a fairly close election.<sup>21</sup>



Courtesy of the author

Bessie Sturges, 1889

<sup>14</sup> The ad was printed on letter-sized paper. In 1906 daughter Bessie Sturges wrote a letter to her parents on the other side of the paper. This letter is in possession of the author.

<sup>15</sup> Ray Little, Conversation with the author, 17 September 2001. Ray is the younger son of Myra Little.

<sup>16</sup> Bessie S. Moulton, Conversations with the author during the 1950s and 1960s.

<sup>17</sup> Connie Little, Untitled three-page manuscript, dated 12 February 1976, in the "Sturges File" at the Wright County Historical Society.

<sup>18</sup> Bessie S. Moulton, Conversations with the author during the 1950s and 1960s.

<sup>19</sup> This ad appeared in a number of Wright County newspapers on 28 October 1926, with slight differences in capitalization and the like: *Delano Eagle* (Delano, Minn.), p. 6; *Monticello Times* (Monticello, Minn.), p. 6; *Clearwater Herald* (Clearwater, Minn.), p. 4; *Annandale Advocate* (Annandale, Minn.), p. 10; *Howard Lake Herald* (Howard Lake, Minn.), p. 4; *Buffalo Journal* (Buffalo, Minn.), p. 4, and one unidentified newspaper for which a clipping was found in the "Sturges File" at Wright County Historical Society in Buffalo. Underneath the ad in several of the papers was the statement: "Prepared and issued by A. E. Sturges for himself and paid for at regular advertising rates." Two of the ads included his photograph.

<sup>20</sup> Prison industries in Minnesota date back to the mid 1870s, beginning with the production of twine and soon followed by the Minnesota Line of farm machinery. [www.minnecor.com/history.htm](http://www.minnecor.com/history.htm) viewed 1 November 2006. MinnCor Industries, Saint Paul, Minnesota.

<sup>21</sup> "Heavy Vote Cast in Wright County ...." *Buffalo Journal* (Buffalo, Minn.), 4 November 1926, p. 1, col. 1. His total vote was 2,704. The other three candidates got: 2,945; 3,074; 2,582.

Fred had a sense of humor and a sharp tongue. He illustrated this in his letter to the Secretary of Agriculture in Washington, probably written in 1933 after the passage of the Agricultural Adjustment Act, an early New Deal program.<sup>22</sup> Fred wrote to apply to go into the “not-raising hogs business” after a friend got a \$1,000 check from the government for not raising hogs. He said he “planned to start off on a small scale, holding myself down to 4000 hogs for which I will receive \$80,000. Now these hogs I will not raise will not eat 100,000 bu[shels] of corn. I understand you pay for not raising corn. Will you pay me for not raising 100,000 bushels of corn which I will not feed the hogs I am not raising?” He also noted that the “hardest part of the business is going to be keeping an individual record of each of the hogs I do not raise.” It is not clear whether he actually mailed this letter.<sup>23</sup>

Fred was a man of his time and place. Very conservative, his concerns—and surely those of his wife—were his family, his work, the park, his community, the local Presbyterian Church, and the Masons. When his granddaughter, Ouida Moulton, married in 1933, he wrote her on behalf of his wife and himself expressing both his love and his philosophy. Ouida obviously valued the letter because it was one of the few keepsakes she still had at the time of her death.

You sure have picked a lean time to start on the journey of life as housekeeper and manager of a new home. All this may be an advantage however if it is viewed from the right angle, as your neighbors will not be expecting quite as much from you as they would if times were booming. You can keep down running expenses without exciting comment and in many ways use the times to advantage. You certainly got us at a time when new tin looks like silver, all the same I have eaten many a good meal on a tin plate and used a tin cup for coffee, and have stood it for over fifty one years, and knowing the stock you came from I have every confidence that you will make good and will be able to do your part towards the keeping of the new home in order. Make the best of what you have and in due time as conditions change you will be able to look back to the beginning with pride and a strength that only comes from a success won under such trying conditions.<sup>24</sup>

Fred, always healthy, lived on until 8 July 1956.<sup>25</sup> His obituary said this of him:

Granddad Sturges was a true pioneer of the old school: a hard worker, honest and thrifty. It is told that as an infant he was carried in his mother’s arms to Monticello during an Indian uprising. He lived through almost the entire history of Buffalo to the present, and could recite voluminous facts about the village, as well as countless anecdotes about the many citizens who lived here in the old days. The kind and beneficent old gentleman will be missed and remembered a long time by his large family and many friends.<sup>26</sup>

After his death, his daughter Myra lived on in the house on Buffalo Lake for a number of years. In 1987, Myra had the house on the market and was willing to sell it to the city for a below market price because she wanted the

<sup>22</sup> David E. Kyvig, *Daily Life in the United States, 1920-1940: How Americans Lived through the “Roaring Twenties” and the Great Depression* (Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 2002, 2004. Revised Edition). See pp. 236-238, about the Agricultural Adjustment Act.

<sup>23</sup> Letter from A. E. Sturges to the Secretary of Agriculture, undated. Copy in the “Sturges File” at the Wright County Historical Society. No indication as to whether or not it was mailed.

<sup>24</sup> Letter from A. E. and Addie Sturges to Miss Ouida Moulton, dated 15 June 1933. Original in possession of the author.

<sup>25</sup> Alfred Eugene Sturges, death certificate no. 1956-MN-018979. Minnesota Department of Health. Division of Vital Statistics, Saint Paul.

<sup>26</sup> “Last Rites for A. E. Sturges,” *Wright County Journal-Press* (Buffalo, Minn.), 19 July 1956, p. 1.



city to have it.<sup>27</sup> The city did buy it and later demolished the house. Myra's son Ray Little thinks they regretted that they did not save it as a historic house.<sup>28</sup>

Though the house, with its artesian well in the front yard, is gone, the family is still remembered by a park on the site named after them. Here is how the Buffalo Recreation and Parks Department describes Sturges Park on its web site:

Sturges Spring runs year round, the land is rolling and contains mature trees and a flower garden, 1297 feet of lake frontage for occasional swimming, fishing from a dock, and boat landing. There is a ball field with bleachers, volleyball court, two horseshoe pits, hockey rink, basketball court, hard surface playing area, play structure, slide, swing set, spring toys, and handicapped structure. Two pavilions are available to be reserved for events and gatherings. Also in the area are two benches, picnic tables, cooking grills, warming house, fishing pier,

<sup>27</sup> DuBuis, Ed. "Sturges Park: A Testimonial to People who Helped Shape Buffalo's first 100 years." *Wright County Journal-Press* (Buffalo, Minn.), 30 July 1987. Full page article, with photographs, in the Second Section.

<sup>28</sup> Ray Little, Telephone conversations with the author on 11 and 16 January 1999. Also: Myra (Sturges) Little, Hand-written notes on a conversation with Myra by an unidentified person, dated 18 March 1987. From the "Sturges File," Wright County Historical Society.

<sup>29</sup> Buffalo, Minnesota, Department of Recreation and Parks. Web site viewed 29 October 2006. [www.ci.buffalo.mn.us/ParksRec/SturgesPark.htm](http://www.ci.buffalo.mn.us/ParksRec/SturgesPark.htm).

— Go To —  
*Sturge's Park, Buffalo, Minnesota.*  
— On The Soo Line 37 Miles from Minneapolis —



Sturges Park, Buffalo, Minn.

*Sturges Park, Buffalo, Minn., postcard, ca. 1907*

Minnesota Historical Society Photograph Collection  
Reproduced by permission

THIS is an ideal place for picnic parties. Plenty of shade, plenty of grass, plenty of pure spring water, plenty of lake shore, plenty of room, and plenty tables. A fine ball ground where people can sit in the shade and see the game. A large pavilion with good floor for dancing, refreshments stands, check rooms, substantial swings, and in fact every advantage and attraction that can be asked for or expected.

All of the above can be found in a bunch at the beautiful picturesque *Sturge's Park*, less than a mile from the Soo depot, Buffalo, Minn.

Buffalo Lake boasts of its fine fishing and beautiful shore. Get your friends together, take a day's outing, and make life worth living, go where you have all the essential requirements of a day's pleasure on the grounds, thus enabling all to enjoy the full programme.

The ideal place for Society, Lodge, Church or Family picnics with accommodations for any number up to five thousand.

Write to or send your committees to confer with

*A. E. Sturges,*  
*Buffalo, Minn.*

ON THE SOO LINE.

*Advertisement for Sturge's Park, ca. 1906*

Courtesy of the author

## ***Great Grandparents of ... Darlene Wendlandt Fasching***

Contact Darlene at: darwfl@aol.com, or 6765 Manor Drive, Mound, MN 55364

---

### **MATERNAL GREAT GRANDPARENTS**

When reports and rumors of a promised land reached Germany, my great grandparents were willing to listen to the shipping agents and the semi-official government representatives who encouraged them to leave their country. What began as a trickle soon swelled to a flood and finally reached tidal wave proportions. America offered an opportunity to spread out, to be free, and to own land. It was at this time, 1845 to 1872, that my relatives immigrated to America.

After arriving in America my ancestors set out from eastern seaports using a combination of water, land, and rail transportation. Several first settled in Illinois or Wisconsin, but eventually my maternal side homesteaded in Hamburg, in Carver County, Minnesota. My paternal side homesteaded near Brownton, in McLeod County, Minnesota.

### **The Bergmanns**

#### **Frederick (Fritz) Wilhelm Bergmann**

Date of Birth: 26 February 1859  
Place of Birth: Riemendorf, Lowenberg Kreis,  
Schlesingen, Germany  
Marriage: 26 November 1880  
Date of Death: 25 February 1932  
Place of Death: Hamburg, Minnesota

#### **Marie Sophy Gruenhagen**

Date of Birth: 23 November 1858  
Place of Birth: Cooper's Grove, Illinois  
Date of Death: 19 December 1926  
Place of Death: Hamburg, Minnesota

Great Grandpa Frederick (Fritz) Wilhelm Bergmann was born at Riemendorf, Lowenberg Kreis, Schlesingen, Germany, to Ernestine Bergmann. It was shortly after this, in 1860, that Ernestine and her brothers and sister immigrated to Wisconsin. (Ernestine, who was not married, later married Carl Menzel in Wisconsin.) In 1864 they moved to Hamburg, Minnesota. Great Grandpa Fred had been living with his grandparents, Gottlieb and Johanna Bergmann, in Germany and, in 1864, all three also came

to Minnesota. Fred continued to live with his grandparents in a separate house on the same homestead as Ernestine and Carl.

At an early age, Fred helped his stepfather, Carl Menzel, in the carpentry business. When he was 11 years old, Fred helped him build Emanuel Lutheran Church. He was a serious, ambitious lad. As a 17 year old, Fred ordered his first carload of lumber for resale. The freight from Portland, Oregon, cost him more than the lumber itself. At the age of 20, Fred purchased his first 80 acres. As time went on, he purchased more land and, when he retired from the business in 1927, he owned 325 acres of land bordering the eastern edge of Hamburg.

In 1880, Fred married Marie Sophy Gruenhagen, who was born in 1858 in Cooper's Grove, Illinois. The daughter of Henry C. Gruenhagen and Anna Marie Dorothea Gehrken, they had come to America in 1857, a year before Marie was born. When Marie was three years old, her family moved from Illinois to a farm three miles west of Hamburg. She attended school at Emanuel and was confirmed there in 1873. Fred and Marie were married in the church that Fred helped his stepfather build ten years earlier. They settled on the land Fred owned, known as the "Bergmann Homestead," east of Hamburg. Ten months after their marriage their first child, Emma, was born. Over the next 18 years seven more children were born, for a total of eight—two girls and six boys. On 26 January 1897, Fred became an American citizen.

Fred wrote in a daily diary until 31 December 1926, the year his wife died. Each day he wrote a few lines about the weather, the health of the household, travels, and news from those who dropped in. He included information on his carpentry work.

Known as "Bergmann's Grove" or "Rosevelt Park," a wooded area on the south side of the road was for many years used as a picnic ground with a bandstand, outdoor restrooms, and other facilities. Town people, farmers, and schools used the park. There were many Fourth of July celebrations and picnics held there.

Fred and Marie were devout Christians and members of Emanuel Lutheran Church throughout their life.

On Sundays, Fred and his family walked to church. Fred, who wore a hand-tailored suit, insisted that the tailor line it with white flannel for warmth. When the roads were muddy, Fred rolled up his pants legs thereby exposing the white flannel. This embarrassed his family; they worried that people seeing this would think it was his underwear. In 1897, Fred was on the building committee to build a new church, which was dedicated on 12 November 1899. It was resolved that ladies were to sit on the east (left) side and men on the west (right) side, both upstairs and downstairs.

The children walked to school. Many times children stayed home from school from April to November to help with the farm work. Sometimes in winter the younger children stayed home because of bad weather. School was never closed in those days. In 1896, English grammar was introduced into the school system.

On special occasions Fred wore a suit and vest, but absolutely refused to wear a necktie. One incident the family recalled is when he was persuaded to go along to have a family picture taken. He wore the suit, white shirt, suspenders, but no tie. Emma and Lydia, his daughters, took a tie along to the photo studio and just before the picture was snapped tried to slip it around his neck; he would have none of it. He appeared in the picture without a tie, collar button showing.

"The Old Sinner from Hamburg" is what he often called himself. In fact, carloads of lumber and shingles often came to the Hamburg depot addressed to "The Old Sinner from Hamburg." He was a man of few words. When he spoke everyone stopped speaking and listened; his word was one of authority. He was a humble man and had a great sense of humor.

His one vice was smoking a pipe, and he saved his Prince Albert Tobacco cans. When he walked past the local saloon and was tempted to have a drink, he would immediately take the change in his pocket and put it in his other pocket. When he returned home he would put this "temptation" money in his Prince Albert can. He then had all this money changed to pennies, replaced it in the cans, and gave it to his grandchildren as Christmas presents. Mechanical pencil sharpeners were not in existence, yet he could sharpen a pencil with his pocketknife as smoothly and perfectly as if he had used one. After his retirement, boxes of pencil stubs not more than an inch long, all with unused erasers, were found. As one

child said, "Didn't Grosspapa ever make a mistake?" Fred was not only honest, but generous, kind, and a good neighbor. He never believed in giving with the blare of trumpets or telling the world of his goodness. He permitted roving gypsies to camp in his woods. The family was amazed that nobody questioned his generosity. When the gypsies were there, and Marie would send one of the grandchildren to the store, they tiptoed very quietly past, scared to death of the gypsies. They later learned that the gypsies stopped primarily to gather herbs that grew in the woods. One day Fred got up early and caught the gypsies milking the cows. He sternly told them, "If you want something, just ask! What you're doing is stealing!" He may have been upset, but he did not chase them away.

Bums also came to the area. In some way they would mark each house so they knew which families would give them something. When they went to Schafers, Mrs. Schafer said she would give them something if



*Marie and Fred Bergmann*

Courtesy of the author

they'd split wood for her. The bums tipped the barrel upside down and put a few pieces of wood on top so it looked like they filled the entire barrel.

Fred was not much for anything extravagant or anything he considered unnecessary, but he did buy an Overland touring car. He paid for it with silver dollars, but he never did learn to drive. In the winter the car was put on blocks in the machine shed. In the spring, the automobile was taken out of storage and tuned up for a spin in the country, driven by one of his sons.

When one of their children was born, Fred was away working. He came home and found Marie asleep on the sofa. He went outside and picked a bouquet of flowers laying them on top of her bosom. He was always a very attentive husband and father.

Cooking was done on a wood stove both for her family and the hired hands that came for haying or threshing. They hauled water from Hamburg Lake by stone boat. (A stone boat is a flat board, curved in front, and pulled by a horse). Later it was pumped from a nearby well. A wooden washtub served for the weekly bath, and the "out house" served other basic human needs. Marie churned butter for the family, made her own soap, and scrubbed the floors on her hands and knees. Many women only washed their hair once a month with borax or egg yolks for shampoo. As Fred was gone much of the time, Marie would do much of the farming, milking the cows, and working in the field.

Marie loved to play with her grandchildren, many times taking them into the woods to play house. They would play "Blind Man's Bluff." She led them through cow manure and then laughed and laughed. She kept a washbasin outside and made them wash their feet before coming into the house. She also saved the parchment paper from the creamery butter; grandchildren would use it as tracing paper. She loved to sing and played the zither, a small musical instrument like a harp. She also had a spinning wheel, which she frequently used. Everything was in

its place; the house was never messy.

Throughout his lifetime, Fred made many trips to Minneapolis and Saint Paul, where he bought lumber and supplies for his lumberyard and carpentry work and also attended lumber conventions. Min-

neapolis is where he took his family shopping as well as visiting family.

Fred and his crew of carpenters had contracts often as far as 14 miles from home, building a number of churches in southern and central Minnesota. He tried to spend the night at home, making the journey morning and night on foot or horseback, through fields and woods. If the job was too far away, he and the crew slept at the place, sometimes on hay in the barn. Many nights Fred sat at the kitchen table well past midnight figuring on jobs by the light from a kerosene lamp. By four or five o'clock the following morning, he was up and ready to go on his carpentry work. One spring Fred had three crews working on 14 barns in the area.



Courtesy of the author

*Bergmann Homestead, 1907*

Fred and Marie had eight children:

- Emma, 1881-1965 (m. Herman Panning),
- Edward, 1883-1951 (m. Anna Henschen),
- Lydia, 1885-1957 (m. William Mueller),
- Frederick, 1886-1974 (m. Emma Oelfke),
- William, 1888-1959 (m. Helena Franke),
- Herbert, 1892-1962 (m. Eva Blood/Julia Lyons),
- Arnold, 1896-1978 (m. Esther Harms), and
- George, 1899-1958 (m. Olga Jenneke).

In 1927, when his health began to fail, Fred retired. Marie had died on 19 December 1926. After she died, he stood at the foot of her bed and said, "My sun has set." He lost interest in most everything except his Bible. He longed to go where she was, and as the weeks and months passed, he seemed to rejoice in the reality that he was just that much nearer his loved one and their eternal home. He died on Thursday, 25 February 1932, lacking but six hours of being 73 years old. Both Fred and Marie are buried in Emanuel Lutheran Cemetery at Hamburg.

## The Muellers

### Johann Jochen Friedrich Mueller

Date of Birth: 4 December 1830  
Place of Birth: Sperin, Mecklenburg, Germany  
Marriage: 15 January 1864  
Date of Death: 29 September 1900  
Place of Death: Hamburg, Minnesota

### Ilsa Marie Christine Luehring

Date of Birth: 28 February 1846  
Place of Birth: Fallingbostel, Germany  
Date of Death: 11 March 1884  
Place of Death: Hamburg, Minnesota

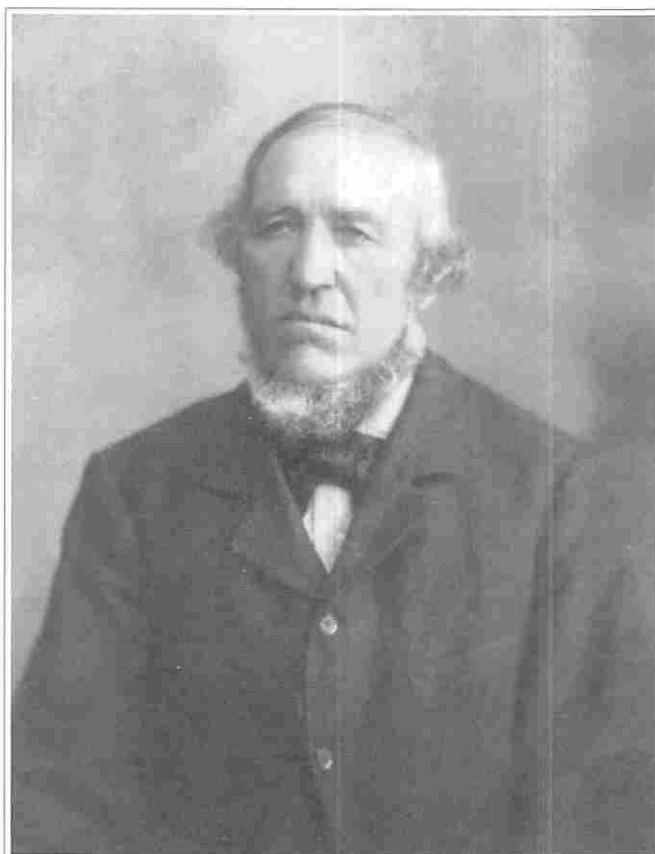
Great Grandpa Johann Jochen Friedrich Mueller was born in 1830 in Sperin, Mecklenburg, Germany, to Johann and Sophia (nee Jahnke) Mueller. In 1854, Johann Jochen, his brother Johann Carl Friedrich, and their sister Marie immigrated to America, settling near Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Two years later, the Muellers moved to Hamburg, Minnesota. This was the same year the other people from the Kingdoms of Hanover, Rhineland, and Mecklenburg arrived in Hamburg. Johann Jochen married my great grandmother, Ilsa Marie Christine Luehring, in 1864.

Ilsa Marie was born in 1846 in Fallingbostel, Germany. She came to America with her family when

she was 10 years old, attended school and church in the settlers' homes, and was in the first confirmation class at Emanuel, in 1861.

Johann and Ilsa began farming on land owned by Ilsa's father west of Hamburg. The land was still forest, and the roads were mostly in the creek beds; it was hard, steady work to do the clearing, farming, and logging that was necessary to make a living. After the farmers cleared the land and the grain was ripe, it was cut with scythes, thrashed by hand, bagged, and carried to Carver to be ground into flour. At times an entire group would set out and enjoy the fellowship of one another returning with their heavy load of staples, thus turning the trip into a joyful undertaking.

Winters were rugged and the Indians were in constant touch. On their wanderings, the Indians would call at the homes and beg for food. When they spied white bread, they would not leave until the last piece was gone. Sometimes they would give a half or a quarter of venison for the food they received. Here and there the Indians would put up their tents to camp. At such times Johann and others would observe the dances



*Johann Jochen Friedrich Mueller*

Courtesy of the author



from a safe distance. Afraid of the Indians, they often fled to Carver, more out of fear than necessity. Several Indian outbreaks did occur, primarily in 1862, so any meeting with the Indians was fearful. No known murders by the Indians occurred in the Hamburg area.

Because of the density of the big woods, a person on horseback had great difficulty riding through it; ox-carts had even greater difficulty. Many times houses could not be seen from a distance. The settlers often felt quite isolated and did not know who their neighbors were, at times not even knowing if they had neighbors. Five years after Johann and Ilsa were married, a family did not realize a neighbor lived less than one mile away until they heard a rooster crowing in the distance.

Johann and Ilsa raised all their food. They dried fruits, raised chickens, ducks, geese, and turkeys. Root crops such as carrots, rutabagas, and turnips were packed in sand. Wooden casks (barrels) of dill pickles and sauerkraut were prepared. Cabbage and potatoes kept well in the cool earthen dugout beneath the cabin. Pillows and mattresses were made from goose feathers; clothes were homemade, even down to shoes.

During the 1870s, the grasshopper scourge was a constant menace. At times the air was so thick with grasshoppers that the sun was obscured, appearing like a vast cloud. At evening when they came down near the earth, the noise they made was like a roaring wind, and the sound they made eating was like hundreds of hogs; every cornstalk bent to the earth with their weight. During the grasshopper plague, the state declared a bounty of one dollar for each bushel of grasshopper eggs collected by 25 May 1877. Governor John S. Pillsbury set aside 26 April 1877, as a day of fasting and prayer; religious services were held throughout the state; and deliverance from the Rocky Mountain locusts was asked. Eventually, the grasshopper scourge in Minnesota ended.

School was very important to my ancestors. Specifics of a teacher's work schedule were to be one hour each of religion, arithmetic, and handwriting per day plus three months instruction in English and seven months instruction in the German language. The school taught the curriculum in "High German" and no other language was to be spoken on school grounds. At home, folks spoke "Plattdeutsch" (Low German) and as years went by, some English.

There were few social events in their lives. Going to church on Sunday was the main event of the entire week. A holiday, especially Christmas, was one special occasion. Quilting bees were also a social gathering as well as a necessity in early pioneer life. Ilsa was at a quilting bee on 11 March 1884. On her way home to nurse her youngest child—my grandfather William, who was 11 months old—the sleigh tipped over and Ilsa was killed. She was 38 years old.

Embalming was not done in those days. They would "lay out the body," often with a glass cover over the top. Family would bathe the body, wash and arrange the hair, clean the mouth and teeth, bandage the jaw in place, and close the eyes. All had to be done before rigor mortis set in. The older girls always felt that Ilsa was not dead, as they saw moisture inside the glass.

Johann had a stroke and was partially paralyzed, but was able to get up and around; he died on 29 September 1900. Both Johann and Ilsa are buried in Emanuel Lutheran Cemetery in Hamburg.

Johann and Ilsa had nine children:

- Martha 1864-1942 (who married Wm. Droege),
- Mary 1866-1949 (Fred Bachman),
- Henrietta 1868-1945 (August Mackenthun),
- Sophia 1870-1939 (Theodore Pinske),
- Fred 1872-1925 (Anna Daniels/Anna Harms),
- Anna 1875-1949 (August Boesche),
- Henry 1877-1957 (Rebecca Boesche),
- Herman 1880-1919 (Sophie Harms), and
- William 1883-1948 (Lydia Bergmann).

## PATERNAL GREAT GRANDPARENTS

### The Renneckes

#### Ludwig Rennecke

Date of Birth: 23 June 1843  
Place of Birth: Magdeburg, Saxony, Germany  
Marriage: 8 March 1868  
Date of Death: 8 December 1918  
Place of Death: Round Grove Township,  
McLeod County, Minnesota



#### Dorothea Zimmerman

Date of Birth: 6 November 1844  
Place of Birth: Boerncke, Saxony, Germany  
Date of Death: 13 December 1922  
Place of Death: Round Grove Township,  
McLeod County, Minnesota



Photos courtesy of the author

Great grandfather Louie Rennecke was born in Magdeburg, Saxony, Germany, in 1843. Louie's father was listed as "Louie" on the death certificate.<sup>1</sup> His mother's name is unknown and oral history says she was not married. His mother later married Mr. Fleisch, and it is known that Louie did have two half brothers, William and Herman Fleisch. Louie grew up in Germany and in 1866 served in the Austro-Prussian War; two years later he served in the Franco-Prussian War.

On 8 March 1868, Louie married Dorothea Zimmerman at Magdeburg, Germany. Dorothea was born in 1844 to Mary Leiner, who was reported to be a slave. She was born in Boerncke near Magdeburg, Saxony,

<sup>1</sup> Louis Rennecke death certificate, died 8 December 1918 in McLeod County, Minnesota; Minnesota Death Certificates index no. 1918-MN-009433; Minnesota Historical Society Library microfilm, St. Paul, Minnesota.

Germany. Dorothea's mother later married Mr. Zimmerman, and from this union she had three half brothers, Fred, Christof, and Gustav Zimmerman.

In the spring of 1872, Louie and Dorothea, with their two oldest children, immigrated to America. Their oldest child, Dora (Dorothea), was three years old and Minnie (Wilhemina) was a year old. Dorothea was pregnant with their third child, Paulina. Most of the Indian Wars as well as the Civil War were over by the time the family arrived in Minnesota. In 1874, they purchased a farm in Round Grove Township, McLeod County, which became their life long residence. The homestead was six miles south of Brown-ton, Minnesota.

Louie and Dorothea were part of the 13 families who separated from St. Matthew's Church in Penn Town due to doctrinal differences and formed St. John's Lutheran Church. St. John's was located a mile north of St. Matthew's. Several of their children were baptized at St. Matthew's while others were later confirmed at St. John's. After St. John's closed, they returned to St. Matthew's.

On 23 June 1890, Louie applied for U.S. citizenship at the McLeod County Courthouse in Glencoe, and received his final papers on 18 May 1897. On 11 June 1898, Louie obtained the land title from the State of Minnesota for homesteading land that was originally set aside for school property. The 1880 plat still shows a small portion of school property just south of Louie's land.

Louie was of a studious nature, well read, and always displayed a great deal of interest in current events. He was well liked by all who knew him. He was also very musical, playing the accordion. Music was the joy of their lives. Dances with "old time" or "oompah"-style polkas, waltzes, and schottisches were a frequent recreational activity. All the Renneckes loved to dance. Louie's son, Gustav, eventually had a dance hall on the original home place.

My uncle said, "Great Grandpa (Louie) was everything, a farmer, a carpenter, and a doctor. A Hex Doctor! Louie claimed he had powers. He would talk over someone, but you couldn't understand what he was saying. He said he couldn't give his powers to a relative, but he could give them to someone else; the only problem was no one wanted them. These 'powers' were the gibberish language he spoke when healing."

Ten children were born to Louie and Dorothea:

- Dorothea (Dora), 1868-1921 (m. Gust Schwarz-rock),
- Wilhelmina (Minnie), 1871-1956 (m. Ed. Borth),
- Paulina, 1872-1959 (m. Carl Haugan),
- Bertha, 1873-1957 (m. John Kohlen),
- Louis, 1876-1953 (m. Emma Wendlandt),
- Anna, 1878-1962 (m. Edward Wendlandt),
- Gustav, 1880-1972 (m. Mary Alsleben),
- Martha, 1882-1961 (m. Ferdinand Wendlandt),
- Otto, 1885-1943 (m. Emma Bulau), and
- Amanda, 1890-1965 (m. Edward Schiro).

In 1918, Louie and Dorothea celebrated their golden wedding anniversary. Later in the year, Louie became ill with lobar pneumonia and passed away on 8 December 1918 at the age of 75 years, 5 months and 15 days. Dorothea felt her end was near and the Holy Sacraments were given to her. On Wednesday, 13 December 1922, she died at the home of her daughter. Death was listed as myocardial insufficiency. She attained the age of 78 years, 1 month and 7 days. Louie and Dorothea are buried in St. Matthew's Cemetery in Penn Township, McLeod County.

## The Wendlandts

### Ferdinand Wendlandt

Date of Birth: 1 October 1836  
Place of Birth: Pomerania, Prussia (Germany)  
Marriage: 22 July 1866  
Date of Death: 9 March 1912  
Place of Death: Brown-ton, Minnesota

### Louise (Louisa) Dorothea Helmer

Date of Birth: 2 September 1848  
Place of Birth: Pomerania, Prussia (Germany)  
Date of Death: 30 January 1941  
Place of Death: Brown-ton, Minnesota

Great grandfather Ferdinand Wendlandt was born in Pomerania, a province in old Prussia, later considered part of Germany.<sup>2</sup> He was born in 1836 and, in 1845, came to America with his family. They are listed as ship passengers on the vessel *Lucina* arriving in New

---

<sup>2</sup> Records are from Established Lutheran Church Tournin, Province of Pomern, State of Prussia.

York on 19 August 1845. The names listed are: William Johan age 40, Christine age 38, Carl age 11, Wilhelmine age 10, Ferd age 9, Caroline age 6, Albertine age 4, and August age 1.

Sailing ships were the transportation of the day. Many hardships were endured on their voyage. Fierce winds rocked the ship and often blew the ship in the opposite direction. Most of the time families were responsible for bringing along their own food. The food could not be properly stored so the last days of the journey were miserable, with many people going hungry. Boredom must have set in for the children. As an adventurous nine year old, Ferdinand climbed the mast on the sailboat.

The family first settled in Wisconsin where they farmed for 16 years. Three more siblings were born in Wisconsin—William and the twins, Henry and Johanna. In 1861, the family relocated to a farm in Penn Township near Brownston, Minnesota.

On 14 April 1861, Minnesota was the first state to offer troops at the outbreak of the Civil War. This is the same year the Wendlandts moved to Minnesota. Both Ferdinand and his brother Carl fought in the Civil War. Ferdinand, responding to President Lincoln's second call for volunteers, was mustered into the military service at St. Peter, Minnesota, on 14 June 1861, as a private in Company E of the 2nd Regiment of Minnesota Volunteer Infantry. Charles (also known as Carl or Karl) was inducted on 30 May 1864, serving in Company I of the 4th Regiment of Minnesota Infantry.

The men from Nicollet County commenced at Chatfield on the 16th of June, and on the morning of the 22nd marched to Winona, traveling in wagons, the same evening, and went thence by river to Fort Snelling, arriving the next day. It was here that they met Bishop's men. They continued on to Fort Ridgely on the upper Minnesota River. The next few weeks were devoted to drill and instruction. On the morning of the 14th of October 1861, the regiment embarked on a large river steamboat under order for Washington, D.C. An hour later they disembarked at the upper levee in St. Paul for a parade march through the city. The people had come out in masses to see them off, and third street from the seven corners to the lower levee was lined with crowds of enthusiastic men,

women, and children, who waved hats, handkerchiefs, and flags, and greeted our passing column with cheers, smiles, tears, and blessings, that at times drowned the gay music of the band and broke up the rhythmic tramp of our platoons in spite of our efforts to be, or at least to appear, soldierly.<sup>3</sup>

Ferdinand fought with Judson Bishop in Sherman's Army in the battles of Logan's Cross Roads, Corinth, Perryville, Tullahoma, Murfreesboro, Hoover's Gap, Chattanooga, Chickamauga, Atlanta, and participated in the "Campaign of the Carolinas" and the "March to the Sea." On 24 May 1865 he was part of the "Grand Review" in Washington, D.C.

After being mustered out, Ferdinand returned to Penn Town in Minnesota and began farming. One year later, in 1866, he was united in marriage to Louise (Louisa) Dorothea Helmer. Louise was born to Michael and Mary (nee Stresemann) Helmer in 1848 in Pomerania, Germany. At the age of five (in 1854), she came with her family to America and settled at Ixonia, Wisconsin. While in Wisconsin, Louise worked for an English lady. After living in Wisconsin seven years they came to Minnesota and settled in Penn Township. St. Matthew's Church had not yet been established so Ferdinand and Louise traveled to Henderson, Minnesota, where Pastor Schmidt married them.

The next spring, in 1867, Rev. Konrad Karow visited the people and conducted Lutheran services in the homes of Ferdinand and Louise Wendlandt and Mr. and Mrs. Christian Stresesman. Twenty members decided to form a congregation (St. Matthew's). The only female charter members were Mrs. Albrecht and Louise Wendlandt.

Ferdinand and Louise settled on a farm just south of St. Matthew's Penn Township Church. The 1870 census shows Ferdinand and Louise had developed 35 acres on the farm and 125 acres of unimproved land. The farm was valued at \$1,000. The implements and machinery were valued at \$175. They had two horses, three milk cows, two other cattle, one

---

<sup>3</sup> *The Story of a Regiment: Being a Narrative of the Service of the Second Regiment, Minnesota Veteran Volunteer Infantry, in the Civil War of 1861-1865*, by Judson W. Bishop. St. Paul, Minn.: [s.n.], 1890.

sheep, and two swine, all valued at \$315. They harvested 260 bushels of spring wheat, 30 bushels of Indian corn, 200 bushels of oats, and 70 bushels of barley. Their total personal property was valued at \$1,000.<sup>4</sup>

Because the names Frank and Ferdinand were used intermittently he had some difficulty obtaining his pension. Statements signed by Frank Wendland from 1882 to 1911 were attempts to obtain his pension. He finally received a pension as another paper states: "The name of the above-described pensioner, who was last paid at \$20 per month to Jan. 4, 1912, has this day been dropped from the roll of this agency. U.S. Pension Agent F. H. Magdeburg. Dated March 27, 1912." After Ferdinand died, Louise applied for a widows' pension on 15 March 1912.

During the Civil War Ferdinand was injured and lost the tip of his left thumb, losing partial use of this hand and was greatly hindered in performing his farm chores. He also suffered from asthma, which at times

affected his lungs. This again affected his ability to fully work on the farm. Many times he relied on his family for help.

Ferdinand and Louise had eight children:

- August, 1867-1946 (m. Katie Steiner),
- Amelia, 1868-1942 (m. Gustav Krueger),
- Fred, 1870-1947 (m. Elizabeth Lenz),
- Frank, 1872-1931 (m. Ida Pautz),
- Edward, 1877-1954 (m. Anna Rennecke),
- Ferdinand, 1881-1942 (m. Martha Rennecke),
- Otto, 1885-1892, and
- Adelia, 1887-1892.

In 1892 the two youngest children, Otto at age 6 and Adelia at age 4, died from diphtheria. Three of Ferdinand and Louise's children continued to farm in the Brownton area: Frank, Edward, and Ferdinand, Jr. Fred moved to Staples to farm and the two oldest children, August and Amelia, eventually moved to Montana.



*Wendlandt Family, 1886*

Courtesy of the author

In 1900, Ferdinand and Louise left the farm and moved into Brownton. Ferdinand died on 9 March 1912, having lived to be 75 years, 5 months, and 8 days. At his funeral a fellow comrade, A.D. Baker, gave this tribute: "Taps Have Sounded, Another Veteran Gone." After Ferdinand died, Louise lived alone until 1929 when her son Ed. and his wife

Anna moved into town with her. On Christmas Day 1940, she suffered a stroke and became weaker until she died on 30 January 1941 at the age of 92 years 4 months and 28 days. She was the only surviving charter member of St. Matthew's Church. Both Ferdinand and Louise are buried in St. Matthew's cemetery, Penn Township, McLeod County.

<sup>4</sup> Fred Wendlandt household, 1870 U.S. census, McLeod County, Minnesota, population schedule 1, Town of Penn, sheet 10, dwelling 85, family 87; agricultural schedule 3, Town of Penn, page 3, line 19; National Archives and Records Administration microform publication T624, roll 7 of Minnesota.



## Minnesota County Officials: Mille Lacs County, 1860-1942

Duane P. Swanson

The following list contains names of Mille Lacs county officials from 1860 to 1942. The names are transcribed from the *Inventory of the County Archives of Minnesota No. 48 Mille Lacs County (Milaca)*, prepared by the Works Projects Administration and published in February 1942. It includes the following officials, most of whom were elected: county commissioners (1860-1942), auditors (1860-1942), registers of deeds (1860-1942), clerks of the district court (1860-1942), judges of the probate court (1860-1942), coroners (1876-1942), court commissioners (1870-1933, 1939-1942), sheriffs (1860-1942), county attorneys (1865-1942), treasurers (1860-1942), county superintendents of schools (1864-1942), county surveyors (1867-1942), highway engineers (1921-1942), and agricultural agents (1918-1942). No attempts have been made to verify the accuracy of this information or to confirm the spelling of the names. Incumbents in office as of 1942 show that date in parentheses; their terms probably continued thereafter. The original publication usually includes the month and day on which the official's position began and ended. Copies of the original publication may be found in the libraries of the Minnesota Historical Society and the Minnesota Genealogical Society.

The area that became Mille Lacs County was originally part of the territorial counties of Benton and Ramsey; it was created from Ramsey County on 23 May 1857. On 18 March 1858 it was attached to Morrison County for judicial purposes. It was organized 25 February 1860 for county government purposes with a county seat at Princeton. On 2 November 1860, the southwest corner of the current county was added from Benton County. On 31 July 1866, Mille Lacs County was fully organized for governmental and judicial purposes. On 7 September 1920, the county seat was transferred to Milaca.



*Mille Lacs County Court House  
Princeton, Minn., 1916*

Minnesota Historical Society Photograph Collection  
Reproduced by permission

Abbott	A.	H.	Superintendent of Schools	1868	1869
Allen	John	J.	Commissioner	1865	1866
Allen	B.	P.	Court Commissioner	1931	1933
Allen	J.	H.	Treasurer	1870	1872
Alstein	B.	M.	Auditor	1885	1897
Anderson	Albert		Court Commissioner	1923	1931
Anderson	Albert		Court Commissioner	1941	1942
Anderson	Axel	A.	Commissioner	1937	1941
Armstrong	A.	C.	Surveyor	1936	1937
Atkins	Howard	M.	Auditor	1863	1867
Atkins	H.	M.	Judge of Probate	1870	1873
Atkins	H.	M.	Court Commissioner	1870	1876
Atkins	H.	M.	County Attorney	1865	1867
Atkins	H.	M.	County Attorney	1870	1870
Atkins	H.	M.	Superintendent of Schools	1866	1867
Atkins	H.	M.	Superintendent of Schools	1870	1872
Axtell	John	G.	Commissioner	1919	1930
Bacon	H.	P.	Coroner	1905	1913





## Four Great-Grandmothers on the Minnesota Frontier

Over several decades as the family historian, I have gradually come to understand that each of my four pioneer great-grandmothers were the strong ones in the family, in many ways outshining their husbands. The following accounts sketch highlights of their Minnesota and pre-Minnesota lives.

### Eliza Davies Hughes

Eliza Davies Hughes (1831-1916) arrived in Cambria, Minnesota, in 1855. She was a native of Cardiganshire, Wales. Her father was a candle maker whose main claim to fame lay in donning a British uniform in the first decade of the 19th century to help protect Wales from an expected invasion by Napoleon. Out of uniform, he was a neer-do-well who spent much of his time in the pubs of Llanarth. When Eliza's three Davies brothers sought work in the coal mines of Tredegar, Monmouthshire, Eliza and her mother accompanied them, leaving the father behind in Cardiganshire.



Eliza Davies Hughes

In 1852 the mother, daughter, and three brothers emigrated to Pomeroy, Ohio, a fledgling Welsh coal-mining community. There, at age 21, Eliza met Henry Hughes. Alone in America, Henry was under-age for legal marriage, but the judge waived the requirement because it was obvious that "Henry needed a stalwart adult to take care of him." In 1855 the Davies brothers decided to stake out claims in a new Welsh community in Cambria (near New Ulm) in Minnesota Territory. Eliza and Henry decided to join them. With their infant son, Thomas, and Eliza's mother, they journeyed down the Ohio River to Galena, Illinois, took a steamboat up the Mississippi to Saint Paul, and then traveled overland by oxcart to Cambria. In this small Welsh settlement, Henry later became postmaster during the Lincoln administration, a job he com-

bined with his farming and lay-preaching.

Henry was nevertheless overshadowed by Eliza in the memories of all who knew them both. She was the backbone of the family—strong, determined, and fearless. Photos show her carrying buckets of water on both shoulders climbing up the hill from the well to their log cabin. After their neighbors were killed in the Dakota Conflict of 1862, the Hughes family fled to Mankato. When their second son tried to stay behind in the log cabin praying, she prodded him back on his feet, saying, "This is no time for praying, Henry John. Let's go!"

The 1860s were tumultuous years for Eliza and her family. They experienced not only the hazards of skirmishes with the Indians, but also the griefs of the Civil War. Eliza's favorite brother, Evan Davies, who had enlisted in the Union Army, was captured in Mississippi and died a prisoner in the notorious Confederate prison at Andersonville, Georgia.

Despite these vicissitudes, Eliza and Henry insisted that their eight surviving children (out of eleven) should have the best educations locally available. The result was that their four daughters went to Mankato Normal School (later the University of Minnesota at Mankato), while their sons went to Carleton College in Northfield. Thomas, their eldest son, was valedictorian of the class of 1880, out-ranking salutarian and later famed economist, Thorstein Veblen. When Thomas married a Carleton classmate in 1885 in Faribault, his Welsh-speaking mother did not attend the wedding, fearing her English was not good enough to be displayed before the new Yankee in-laws.

Eliza was a large, imposing woman who radiated determination and will power. Her children always gave her the credit for the family's good fortune in surviving the hardships of the early pioneer days. In their old age, after 35 years in southern Minnesota, Eliza and Henry moved to Pasadena, California, where he died in 1912 and she in 1916.

*All photographs courtesy of the author.*

## Sybil Barlow Rawson Hills

Sybil Barlow Rawson Hills (1830-1903) arrived at Cannon Falls, Minnesota, in 1862. Sybil was the descendant of old New England Pilgrim and Puritan families that included Edward Rawson, the first secretary of the Massachusetts Bay Colony, and William White, a Mayflower passenger from 1620. Some of her

relatives were also famous contemporaries. Her mother, for instance, was Charity Root, a cousin of Elihu Root, the U.S. senator from New York, secretary of state and war, recipient of the 1912 Nobel Peace Prize, and president of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace.

Sybil grew up in Amherst, Ohio, and attended Oberlin College, where she met her husband, Amos Ball Hills. Oberlin in the 1850s was an important station for the Underground Railroad, and Sybil and Amos were active in helping slaves to freedom. They both graduated from Oberlin in 1853, making Sybil one of the United States' early women college graduates. They were married at Oberlin immediately after graduation and promptly set out for Jamaica as Congregational missionaries, where Sybil was as active as her husband. In addition to her official reports, now in the archives of the American Board of Foreign Missions, Sybil wrote home about life in Jamaica—letters which remain in the author's collection.

Sybil's accounts of Caribbean life are full of local color—horseback riding through the mountains, harvesting tropical fruit, swimming in the Atlantic, and showing lantern slides to young Jamaicans with views of Jerusalem and the Holy Land. Although they were Congregationalists, she and Amos were living in a British colony, so she used the Anglican Book of Common Prayer. Her everyday life in the mountains of northeast Jamaica consisted of vegetable farming, regular visits to parishioners and other neighbors, and occasional trips into Kingston for provisions and books. Sybil churned milk into butter, and we still have her bamboo churn and other memorabilia, including large conch shells and an armadillo woven into a basket.



*Sybil Barlow Rawson Hills*

After six years in Jamaica, where my grandmother, Alice Orianna Hills, was born, Sybil and Amos returned to the States. They settled in southern Missouri just in time for the Civil War and, as abolitionists, they quickly found themselves in danger. One day in early 1860, Amos was warned at the local post office that he was about to be tarred and feathered by Southern sympathizers. He mounted his horse, seated my four-year-old grandmother in front of him, and headed straight north to Minnesota, leaving Sybil and the other children to follow on their own.

Having lost the Missouri property in a forced sale, Amos appealed for help to his father, Hezekiah Hills, who was still living in western New York. Hezekiah sized up the situation and agreed to buy a farm in Minnesota for the couple, subject to the condition that the title be put in Sybil's name. Apparently, Hezekiah had more confidence in the level-headedness of his daughter-in-law than of his son.

After living briefly with Sybil's sister in Cannon Falls, Minnesota, the couple began farming in Fari-bault in 1863. They put a high value on education, and all four of their children, like the Hugheses, went to Carleton College. Their daughter, Alice, studied classics, majoring in Greek. While in Northfield, Alice also developed into a talented artist and continued to sketch and paint in the decades after her marriage to Thomas Hughes.

Sybil herself remained a great reader. Even in her old age, her letters were full of references to the classics and novels she was reading. Although they were never prosperous, at important junctures of the Hills's family life it was Sybil who was the mainstay of family unity and support. She was a model for her three daughters, encouraging them to follow in her footsteps in church and community life. She was also an early Minnesota example of an educated woman of Yankee heritage whose family had made its way to the Upper Midwest over a couple of generations, often after settling first in western New York or Ohio following the Revolutionary War.

## Wilhelmina Elizabeth Schlager Lowe

Wilhelmina Elizabeth Schlager Lowe (1824-1883) arrived in Hadley, Minnesota in 1874 from Scotland. Her father, Charles Frederick Schlager, was born in Germany, the descendant of a long line of artists belonging to a branch of the Hohenzollern rulers of



Prussia and later of the German Empire. He had left Germany in 1812 to avoid serving in Napoleon's invasion of Russia. Making his way to Scotland, Charles became a merchant in Edinburgh, and married a Scottish wife. His exotic life's story has been narrated elsewhere.



*Wilhelmina Schlager Lowe*

Wilhelmina left Edinburgh at age 5 in 1828, accompanying her parents and siblings across the Atlantic to Canada. They settled in LaChute, Quebec, a town some fifty miles west of Montreal. In 1836 Wilhelmina met a young Scottish immigrant ploughman, James Lowe. Traveling alone at 16, he had crossed the Atlantic to join his father, who had arrived two years earlier. Wilhelmina and James were married in 1845. Together they had eleven children, eight of whom survived. Although at first James was successful at farming, later financial distress and family squabbles led him to seek his fortune in the California Gold Rush in 1867-8. Taking his eldest son along, he went by boat to Panama, crossed the Isthmus by rail, and then boarded another ship to San Francisco, thereafter spending several months near Fort Ross prospecting.

Back in Canada, Wilhelmina shouldered the responsibilities of feeding, clothing, and supervising the education of seven young children while enduring local rumors about her husband's 'desertion' of his family. When his California venture failed, however, James returned and the family was reunited. In 1868, they staked out a homestead claim in Iowa. Eight years later, in 1876, they moved north to a new farm near Hadley, Minnesota.

Wilhelmina's early photos show her as a beautiful young woman, but she died in 1883 at age 60, prematurely aged and wrinkled. Perhaps with some remorse for his role in her hard life, her husband wrote a memorial poem dedicated "To Wilhelmina." It includes the lines:

"You kissed affliction's chastening rod,  
Then calmly gave thy soul to God.  
The race appointed you have run,  
Your trials and your work are done.

"My friend in peace, my friend in strife,  
My faithful and devoted wife.  
No more you'll coax, no more you'll chide,  
No more you'll flatter or deride.

"That tireless step, those busy hands,  
Have paid the last of life's demands.  
Lonely in age and grief careworn  
My helpmate from my side is torn.

"Few joys I've had, those few have fled,  
And thou art numbered with the dead.  
To meet you I must soon prepare,  
Dissembling friends can't sow strife there."

### **Sarah Ann Smith Southwell**

Sarah Ann Smith Southwell (1836-1906) arrived in Slayton, Minnesota, in 1882. Like Sybil Rawson Hills, she was descended from prominent 17<sup>th</sup> century New England families. Sarah's forbearers had moved from Massachusetts and Connecticut in generational stages to Vermont, Ohio, and Michigan. Like Eliza Davies Hughes, her father was a neer-do-well drifter from a respected family. Her mother, like Sarah herself later on, became the mainstay of the family, her stability essential to the next generation's prosperity.



*Sarah Ann Smith Southwell*

Sarah's older siblings grew up in Randolph, Ohio, among a group of other transplanted New England families. Before Sarah's birth, the family had moved on to Michigan. It was there that Sarah met Oran Martin Southwell, perhaps through Presbyterian Church connections. She was 19 and he was 20 when they were wed in 1855.

The Southwells began married life in Illinois, where they were caught up in the political excitement of the pre-Civil War years and attended the Lincoln-Douglas debates. Heeding Lincoln's call for volunteers, Oran Southwell, a druggist by trade, enlisted and was soon commissioned an officer. He was stationed in Nashville and fought in the Tennessee battles of Lookout Mountain and Chickamauga, where he was wounded. After being wounded a second time at Kennesaw Mountain in Georgia, he retired as a captain in the Union Army. Back in Illinois at war's



end, he remained the commander of the Wenona Guard for the next fifteen years. He died in 1879 at age 44, leaving Sarah a widow with four daughters.

Three years later Sarah and her daughters moved to the then tiny town of Slayton, Minnesota. Sarah tried to establish her entitlement to a federal pension as the widow of a Civil War veteran, a task finally accomplished in 1891 after several setbacks. Meanwhile she needed employment.

Providentially her previous life in Illinois had given her a political connection to Adlai Stevenson I (grandfather of the 20<sup>th</sup> century presidential candidate). In 1885 he became postmaster general under Grover Cleveland, the first Democratic president since the Civil War. Sarah approached Stevenson through an Illinois intermediary, and in November, 1885, she was appointed postmistress at Slayton.

Since Cleveland had been elected with the promise of Civil Service reform, Sarah's appointment was not exactly congruent with the new president's campaign theme. Thus, rather nervously, Sarah's intermediary wrote from Washington: "It will be just as well to say nothing as to how this appointment was secured. Your family may know it, but outside of that, let it remain 'mysterious.' I promised to do something (helpful) some day, and I am glad the opportunity came so soon. It will be quite necessary to give special personal attention to the office. Study the rules so that all reports may be made promptly and correctly. I suggest this because I want no possible excuse offered for a 'change' in the near future. If the office is conducted properly there can be no change during this administration." Sarah apparently conducted the office properly for she continued as postmistress through the first Cleveland administration and for a year or two into Harrison's Republican administration that followed.

Sarah lived in Slayton for nearly two decades. She was active in public causes as well as church and social circles. She saw each of her four daughters happily married to upstanding citizens and was widely admired for her self-confidence, agility, and competence.

### Conclusion

My four great-grandmothers, from very different origins and backgrounds, made their respective ways to southern Minnesota between 1855 and 1885. In Cam-

bria, Faribault, Hadley, and Slayton, their lives of quiet achievement were often taken for granted, usually submerged in the prominence given to their husbands in the contemporary accounts of local history. In reality these wives often overshadowed their spouses in contributing the grit and determination which produced livelihoods and held families together. Like thousands of other frontier women, they were genuine heroines whose life stories should not remain obscure.

### Sources

This article is based on information from several sources.

The eldest son of Henry and Eliza Davies Hughes, Judge Thomas Hughes of Mankato (1854-1934), was a leading southern Minnesota historian. His published books, unpublished family manuscripts, as well as his extensive diaries, letters, and notes on the Hughes and Hills families can be found in four collections: the Minnesota Historical Society, Saint Paul, Minnesota; the Carleton College Archives, Northfield, Minnesota; the Blue Earth County Historical Society, Mankato, Minnesota, and the Minnesota State University-Mankato.

Also of note with regard to Eliza is the book, *The Henry Hughes Story*, based on an autobiographical manuscript and published in 2009 by the Blaenau Gwent Heritage Forum in the Hughes hometown of Tredegar, Wales.

Family letters from Sybil Hills in Jamaica and Minnesota remain in the author's possession. Copies of "The Miles of Yesterday," a family history written by her daughter, Irene Hills Bliss, can be found at the above libraries in Saint Paul and in Northfield.

The ancestry of Wilhelmina Schlaberg Lowe has been thoroughly researched in Germany, Scotland, and Canada; extensive files are held by the author. The unpublished letters, diaries, poems, and notes of her husband, James Lowe, are in the Minnesota Historical Society files in Saint Paul.

Sarah Smith Southwell's surviving letters, her family history, correspondence regarding her post office appointment, and testimonials to her husband's military service are in the author's possession. Oran Southwell's Civil War records and pension papers are at the National Archives in Washington, D. C.





MN  
MISC  
1.13



The church (on Co. Rd. 16, 1 mi. E of U.S. 52), pictured in 1935

## Union Prairie Lutheran's "three score years and ten" were documented in 1935

In 1853, Torger Peterson Lunde with his wife Martha and their family, left his native home in Ringsaker, Norway, and came to Wisconsin. After a short stay, he and Anders Tollefson Lunde, pioneer and builder, started with their families in covered wagons drawn by oxen for Fillmore County, Minnesota. They followed the old military trail from Milwaukee, through Madison, Blue Mounds, Dodgeville, and Prairie du Chien, where they ferried to McGregor, Iowa. From there the trail led to Decorah, which at that time boasted a small country store and a blacksmith shop. Thence they came through what is now Burr Oak to Lenora in Fillmore County.

*The 70th Anniversary of the Union Prairie Lutheran Church (Fillmore County), 1865 - 1935, was celebrated by a 20 page history, compiled in 1935 by Rev. P. J. Nestande, a copy of which was donated to the library by MGS member Margaret Westman. Information of genealogical interest was taken from this volume.*

They found a settler at Lenora, and made a temporary halt. Then leaving Torger Peterson Lunde in charge, Anders Tollefson Lunde walked in a northwesterly direction until he came to the northeast corner of what is now Section 22 of Preston Township. On this parcel of land he found a good spring of water, some timber, and fine virgin soil. Game was plentiful and the nearby streams teemed with fish.

The next day he walked back to Lenora, rejoining the caravan, and led them to his claim in Section 22. He took his claim on 6 August 1853, the first in the neighborhood.

Torger Peterson Lunde filed nearby in section 23. One of his children, Mrs. Tonette Lunde Afseth, still living [1935] was seven years old when the family settled there. More settlers arrived in 1854. The new settlement became known as the "Lunde Settlement" or the "South Settlement" of Union Prairie. Among these was L. O. Larson (Borkrud) who was born in the Clinton neighborhood of Dane County, Wis., 30 April 1851. He came with his parents Mr. and Mrs. Ole Larson Borkrud. [Larson provided much information to the author, particularly for the first 12 years of settlement before the organization of the church. Nestande also consulted secretaries' records for the 70 year period.]

Of those who joined the settlement in 1854 with their families, we have the following names:

Borkrud, Ole Larson	Lunde, Andreas Tollefson
Bye, Ole Monson	Lunde, Michael Tollefson
Kjernaas, Ole O.	Strand, Knute Bendixon
Krees, John	

A little later came Thomas Wilson, John D. Olson and others.

In the fifties and early sixties pioneers from various parts of Norway came to Carrolton Township, known as the "Northern Settlement." Among this group were:

Ausen, Gulbrand	Gulbrandson, Ole
Belle, Knute	Helgeson, Helge
Belle, Tollef	Laastuen, Halvor O
Benton, Kristopher	Levorson, Knute
Engebretson, A.	Orton, Knute
Engebretson, Ole	Skarie, Juul
Fredsvik, Hans Bradley	Thompson, Kjel

The first religious services in the South District were held in the Torger Peterson Lunde cabin home in October, 1856, conducted by Rev. U. V. (Ulrik Vilhelm) Koren [b 1826, d 1910] of Washington Prairie, near Decorah, Iowa. Rev. Koren returned several times to the new settlement as well as to the north settlement, which was also visited by Rev. H. A. (Herman Amberg) Preus [b 1825, d 1894] of Spring Prairie, Wis. In 1857, Rev. A. A. (Andreas A.) Sheie [b 1818, d 1881], who had come to Wisconsin in 1840, became pastor of the Newburg Community and preached several times in the Union Prairie settlement. Rev. N. E. S. Jensen





Minnesota

Japp, William  
Jarvi, Ero  
Johnson, Clarence  
Johnson, Lavern  
Johnson, Raymond  
Johnson, Walter  
Jutila, Arvo  
Jytila, Ernest  
Kelly, Gordon  
Kishel, Frank  
Kokkonen, Alpo  
Koski, Wilbur  
Krivz, John  
Krzisnik, Luke  
Lamm, Francis  
Lampinen, Harry  
Larson, Elbert  
Laurich, Stanley  
Linde, George  
Lindquist, Leroy  
Marsh, John  
Masucci, Bernard  
Matko, Milan  
Mattson, Fredrick  
McGuire, Earl  
Meglen, Louis  
Miklousich, Ludvik  
Montbriand, Eugene  
Mueller, Lawrence  
Miller, Albert  
Neittamo, Eino  
Nelson, Gordon  
Nicholls, William  
Niemi, Waino  
Novakovich, Nick  
Nystrom, George  
Obidowski, Paul  
Opacich, Dan  
Ostby, Milton  
Pagliarini, Fred  
Palluch, Joseph  
Pavelich, John  
Pechar, Edward  
Perala, Eino  
Persling, Jack

ORANGE COUNTY CALIFORNIA  
GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

Peterlin, John  
Peterson, Clyde  
Petron, Lawrence  
Piekarski, Stanley  
Plesha, Tony  
Pogachnik, John  
Pogorelec, Tony  
Posch, Clarence  
Pugel, Edward  
Rebrovich, Matt  
Richards, Clifford  
Robich, Victor  
Ronconi, Carlo  
Ryan, Cletus  
Sabetti, Tony  
Salo, Ray  
Schimschock, Clarence  
Semanko, Frank  
Shustersich, John  
Sikora, Casimir  
Skerjance, Louis  
Skramstad, Alvin  
Sperling, Albert  
Spolerich, John  
Stahovich, Louis  
Strukel, Matt  
Suilonen, Sigvert  
Thompson, Tommy  
Toleen, Leslie  
Uran, Clayton  
Valley, Paul  
Vavra, Robert  
Verbick, Stanley  
Vukson, George  
White, Neil  
Wichman, Kenneth  
Wirta, Victor  
Yanta, Raymond  
Yurchich, Joe  
**L. E. M.'s**  
Bjorum, Henry  
Clark, Martin  
Lindman, Einard  
Majasich, Steve  
Sotlich, John  
Sullivan Jack  
Wiljamaa, Arthur

OCCGS REFERENCE ONLY

# THANKSGIVING

DINNER

Company 3708, Project P-56  
Lake Vermilion  
CCC  
Ely, Minnesota  
1936



COURTESY OF THE KELLOGG COMPANY, BATTLE CREEK, MICHIGAN

## MENU

---

Hearts of Celery

Sweet Pickles

---

Roast Young Turkey

Sage Dressing

Cranberry Sauce

Giblet Gravy

Creamed Peas

Snowed Flaked Potatoes      Candid Sweet Patoes

---

Pineapple Marshmallow Whipped Cream Salad

Mince Pie

Pumpkin Pie with Whipped Cream

---

Candy

Assorted Wafers

Cigarettes

Beverage

## ORGANIZATION

### OFFICER PERSONNEL

R. A. Clough, 1st. Lt. Inf-Res.	Commanding Officer
W. H. Ward, 1st. Lt. Eng. Res.	Junior Officer
O. E. Snyder, 1st. Lt. Med Res.	Camp Surgeon

### FORESTRY PERSONNEL

D. H. Wilson - Superintendent	Ted R. Miller - Junior Forester
Leo Wiljamaa - Junior Forester	Harley Janelle - Junior Forester
Geo. Schnorr - Construction Foreman	C. E. Toor - Construction Foreman
Willard Wagner - Const. Foreman	Daniel Lawson - Const. Foreman
Michael Dobbs - Senior Foreman	

### LEADERS

Balfanz, Ervin  
Chernivec, Frank  
Cook, Wilbur  
Herbest, Brinton  
Johnson, Rolland  
Kreger, Harry  
Lindman, John  
Litfin, Jack  
Soucy, Roy

### ASSISTANT LEADERS

Bakken, Milo  
Donovan, Harold  
Hansen, John  
Heikkala, John  
Hytinen, Erland  
Jones, Frank  
Maki, William  
Mosher, Kenneth  
O'Connor, Leonard  
Pazzelli, Victor  
Rahko, Heino  
Ritala, George  
Scullard, Louis  
Soucy, Louis  
Wilde, George

### MEMBERS

Aari, Sever  
Aho, Tlovo  
Anders, James  
Anderson, Wallace  
Babich, Joe  
Balfanz, Raymond  
Barry Arthur

Bauermeister, Edwin  
Becker, Donald  
Begich, Thomas  
Bentfield, Elmer  
Berg, Aaron  
Bielljeski, Florian  
Bourcier, Daniel  
Bonich, George  
Bonich, John  
Bradshaw, Otto  
Bruzenak, Steve  
Capan, John  
Carpenter, Homer  
Christian, Wilbur  
Dahlin, Harold  
Deeg, Russell  
Dilorio, Christ  
Dodge, Bradley  
Eaver, Robert  
Everson, Earl  
Ford, Oscar  
Fournier, Ernest  
Gardiepy, Russell  
Gerbach, Raymond  
Glatch, Joe  
Goyette, Walter  
Gunderson, John  
Halunen, Jalmer  
Happy, Edward  
Hecimovich, Tony  
Hyvonen, Milton  
Isaacson, Wallace  
Jacka, Wallace  
Jackson, Gilbert  
Jagunich, Frank



