

## CHAPTER THREE

### EMIGRATION

*“They left their country; they left their friends; they left their families; they made the sacrifice; they were hopeful; they were adventurous; they were explorers; – and we are their children.”<sup>1</sup>*

#### JOHANN FRIEDRICH HEUER (1808 - 1872)

Johann Friedrich Heuer was born 18 April 1808 in the village of Neides, Kreis Greifenberg, Pommern, Prussia. He was the first child and first son of Martin and Louise Brockhuss Heuer. Baptized on 24 April 1808 in Neides, his sponsors were: Johann Heuer, his father’s cousin (a son of Michael Heuer) from Karnitz; Friedrich Brockhuss, his maternal uncle from Neides; and Maria Konradt, a servant woman from Neides.



*Karnitz Church – 1996 – the central church for the Heuers while they lived in Neides and Karnitz from 1707 to 1825. Johann Friedrich and all his siblings, except Maria Caroline Friederike, were baptized here. (Courtesy of Suzanne Emelyn Heuer Vlach)*

Johann Friedrich was not quite two years old when his brother, Carl Gottlieb, was born 26 January 1810. His first sister was born 1 December 1811. She was named Marie Elizabeth Louise, but she died after living only six weeks. The fever that took her young life also attacked her Grandmother Sophia who, with Grandfather Caspar, lived with the Martin Heuer family. Sophia’s death record, in the church register, stated that she had a fever for eight weeks that Caspar was also suffering from, and she died of the fever. The exact date of Caspar’s death is not known. It could have been an oversight in the records because of an apparent epidemic at the time. However, it is safe to assume that Caspar died during this period. All three were buried in the Karnitz church cemetery.

A year later another sister, Carolina Christina Elizabeth, was born 27 December 1812. She lived for only eight weeks. A second brother, Joachim David Wilhelm was born 29 September 1814. He was almost four years old when he died 5 March 1818. Another brother, Ernst Friedrich August, was born 9 September 1818. He was the last son of Martin and Louise Heuer, but he too was not destined to reach adulthood. He died on 17 January 1824 when Johann Friedrich was sixteen and his remaining brother, Carl Gottlieb, was fourteen. Ernst Friedrich August, along with his two sisters and one brother, would be the last of this family to be buried in the Karnitz church cemetery.

During the years when Johann Friedrich and Carl Gottlieb reached the age of fourteen, confirmations were not recorded in the Karnitz church. Some churches recorded them and others did not. However, there is no doubt that both Johann and Carl were confirmed in the church.

Three years later, Maria Caroline Friederike Heuer, Johann Friedrich’s third sister and his seventh and last sibling was born in Kahlen, Kreis Cammin, on 17 February 1827. Her mother’s name on the birth record was incorrectly entered as Dorothea Sophia Brockhuss.<sup>2</sup> Maria was baptized in

Kahlen (now Kalen, Poland), one of the small villages served by the Zirkvitz (now Cerkwica, Poland) Evangelische Church. Sponsors for this event were Joachim Friedrich Brockhuss, Caroline Sophia Draeber Tanck, and Marie Caroline Louise Tanck. This new daughter was christened Maria Caroline but like many others, both men and women, she changed her name as it suited her. Later she was often known as Caroline Marie. However, to prevent confusion and maintain consistency, she will retain her birth name for this history.

The fact that the birth of this daughter was recorded in the Zirkvitz church register, with Kahlen noted as the place the family lived, suggests that the Heuer family had moved from Neides. Kahlen was one of the smaller villages attached to the Zirkvitz church. The others were Gross Moitzow, Klein Moitzow, Muddelmow (now Modlimowo), Parpart (now Paprotno), Tressin (now Trzeszyn), and Zitzmar (now Ciecierz). Moitzow and Gedde, not having today’s Polish names, are still Polish villages, too small to appear on most maps as they are just clusters of houses.

In 1827, the Martin Heuer family was living in Kahlen and working in the area around the central town of Zirkvitz. The family consisted of Martin, Louise, and children: Johann Friedrich, Carl Gottlieb, and Maria Caroline Friederike. Martin’s occupation was listed as *budner*, or one who owns the house but not the land. *Budner* is also a day worker.

Christian Ruhnke and his wife, Dorothea Maria Weber, also lived in the village of Kahlen with their family of two

daughters and two sons. Church records state that Christian was a shepherd. The Ruhnke family originally lived in Gross Zapplin (now Czapplin Wielke). This is where their oldest son, Johann Friedrich, was born in 1811. Their two older daughters, Friederike Louise, born 25 November 1804, and Catharina Sophia, born 25 March 1808,<sup>3</sup> may also have been born in Gross Zapplin; but the records there begin with the year 1810, and these two young women were both born before that time. The family then moved to Kahlen, between the years 1811 and 1819, where the two daughters were confirmed in the Zirkvitz Evangelische Church: Friederike Louise in 1819 and Catharina Sophia in 1822. The Ruhnke's fourth child, Carl Wilhelm, was born in 1822 and baptized in Kahlen.

Almost a year to the day after Friedrich Wilhelm, her fifth and last child, was born 10 April 1827, Dorothea Maria Weber Ruhnke died in Kahlen on 9 April 1828. Her husband, Christian Ruhnke, was listed as next of kin. Cause of death was consumption; the current medical term is pulmonary tuberculosis. She was forty-four years, nine months, and twenty-three days old.



*Field adjacent to the Karnitz Church. (Courtesy of Suzanne Emelyn Heuer Vlach-1996)*

**JOHANN FRIEDRICH HEUER (1808 - 1872)**  
**FRIEDERIKE LOUISE RUHNKE (1804 - 1832)**

The Heuers and Ruhnkes were two separate families in the Zirkvitz congregation. That would soon change. Martin and Louise Heuer moved from Kahlen to Parpart, a small village not far from Kahlen, sometime between June 1827 and November 1828. On 29 November 1828, little more than six months after her mother died, Friederike Louise Ruhnke, twenty-four, married Johann Friedrich Heuer, twenty, in Kahlen. Both the bride and groom were the oldest children in their respective families. After their marriage, Johann Friedrich moved into the Christian Ruhnke home. Because Christian Ruhnke was now an old man with two grown daughters and three young sons, Johann Friedrich Heuer took over the role as head of the Ruhnke household.



A year later on 12 November 1829, a son was born to Johann Friedrich and Friederike Louise. He was christened on 22 November and given the name Carl Friedrich Wilhelm. His maternal aunt, Catharina Sophia Ruhnke, was one of his sponsors. His name, Carl, may have been in honor of his paternal uncle, Carl Gottlieb Heuer, who was still living with his parents, Martin and Louise, in Parpart.

Johann Friedrich moved his wife, young son, and the Christian Ruhnke family to Zitzmar, a short distance from Kahlen. That is where, after only three-and-one-half years of marriage, Friederike Louise died on 23 April 1832. She was twenty-seven years, five months, and twenty-eight days old at the time of her death. Her two-and-a-half year old son, Carl Friedrich Wilhelm, was left without a mother but Friederike Louise's sister, Catharina Sophia, immediately assumed that role.

**CARL FRIEDRICH WILHELM HEUER (1829 - 1850)**

Carl Friedrich Wilhelm Heuer was born to Johann Friedrich and Friederike Louise Ruhnke Heuer on 12 November 1829 in Kahlen, Kreis Cammin, Pommern, Prussia. He was their only child. Carl was baptized on 22 November with his maternal aunt, Catharina Sophia Ruhnke, as one of his sponsors. The others were Friedrich Klederhus from Cammin and Friedrich Brockhuss from Nitznow.

Carl was only two-and-one-half years old when his mother died. As related above, he and his parents were living with his maternal grandfather, Christian Ruhnke, in Zitzmar. When Friederike Louise died, Carl's father soon married her sister, Catharina Sophia Ruhnke, formerly his aunt and now his stepmother.

Johann Friedrich and Catharina Sophia began having a family of their own, and Carl was an integral part of this family as the oldest son. He was confirmed on 8 October 1843 in Borntin, a small village near Goerke, where his parents had moved in 1836.

Carl Friedrich Wilhelm Heuer died suddenly of a fatal heart attack on 20 December 1850. He lived only twenty-one years, one month, and eight days and never married. The record of his death stated his occupation was farm worker. He was buried in the Goerke church cemetery. (Although Carl Friedrich Wilhelm is included in the Johann Friedrich and Catharina Sophia Heuer family history, which continues below, it was felt he should be mentioned here with his parents).

**JOHANN FRIEDRICH HEUER (1808 - 1872)**  
**CATHARINA SOPHIA RUHNKE (1808 - 1899)**

According to custom, a man who was widowed, especially if he had children, would marry again as soon as possible. There was little choice in the matter for Johann Friedrich since he was the surrogate head of the Ruhnke household, and Catharina Sophia, her father, and three brothers were living in the house in Zitzmar at the time. Johann Friedrich, twenty-four, and his sister-in-law, Catharina Sophia Ruhnke, also twenty-four, were married on 6 October 1832 in Zitzmar.

Johann Friedrich began using Friedrich as his first name on the records. For his marriage to Friederike Louise and again for his marriage to Catharina Sophia, he used his complete name, Johann Friedrich. On the record of his child's birth and baptism, he used Friedrich and again for the death record of his first wife. The same was true for Catharina Sophia. Before her marriage, for confirmation, she used both names. For the record as a sponsor for her nephew, Carl Friedrich Wilhelm, it was Sophia. Later, for her marriage, she was again, Catharina Sophia, but that was the last time it was written this way. To prevent confusion, from here forward their full given names, Johann Friedrich and Catharina Sophia, will be used.



With the marriage, Catharina Sophia, formerly an aunt and a sponsor for Carl, became his stepmother. Her duties now included: wife, mother, and housekeeper for the family, which still included her father, Christian Ruhnke, and three brothers.

The birth of Wilhelmine Caroline Rosaline Heuer to Johann Friedrich and Catharina Sophia on 9 October 1833 in Tressin was surely a happy occasion. The location for this event indicated that the Johann Friedrich Heuer and Christian Ruhnke families had moved again.

The whole family may have joined in the celebration of the marriage of Johann Friedrich's brother, Carl Gottlieb Heuer, on 19 February 1836. He was twenty-six and his bride, Friedericke Dorothea Kicker, was twenty-two. Friedericke Kicker was the oldest daughter of Carl Kicker, a fisherman and *budner* in Pustchow. The wedding was held in Pustchow (now Pustkowo) near Hoff. Hoff (now Trzesacz) was a town on the coast of the Baltic Sea, and Carl Gottlieb, with his father-in-law, Carl Kicker, had a fishing boat and operated a fishing business. Carl and Friedericke had two children, August Friedrich Wilhelm born in 1837, and Albertine Maria Johanna Caroline born a year later in 1838. Carl Gottlieb's father was noted as, "Martin Heuer from Parpart" and Carl's occupation as *jachtsman*, which translates to owning and operating a boat.



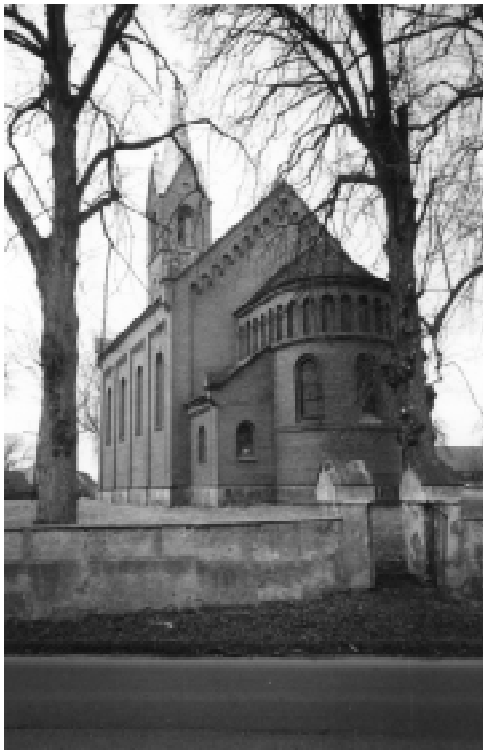
A second child was born to Johann Friedrich and Catharina Sophia on 2 July 1836. He was given the name August Ferdinand. His new aunt, uncle Carl Gottlieb Heuer's wife, Friedericke Dorothea, was one of his baptismal sponsors. In January 1837, the favor was returned when Johann Friedrich was a sponsor for Carl Gottlieb's son, named August Friedrich Wilhelm Heuer, born 26 January 1837. In this baptismal record, Johann Friedrich's place of residence was given as Borntin. The Johann Friedrich Heuer family, accompanied by the Christian Ruhnke family, had moved once again, this time from Tressin to Borntin, between July and December of 1836. Here they would stay for more than twenty years. Borntin was served by the church at Goerke (now Gorzyca, Poland).



Sometime after 1836, Johann Friedrich's parents, Martin and Louise Heuer, and their daughter, Maria Caroline Friederike, moved from Parpart to Borntin to live with, or to be near, their oldest son and his family.

It was not until 1839, although they had lived there for three years, that a mention was made in the Goerke church record of the Heuer family. That record announced the birth of another son, Ferdinand Carl, on 10 October 1839 in Borntin. Ferdinand Carl was the couple's third child.

Another death in the family occurred in November 1839. Friedericke Dorothea, the wife of Carl Gottlieb Heuer, died



Goerke Church – 1996 – the central church the Heuers attended while living in Borntin from 1836-57. (Courtesy of Ronald Henry Heuer)

in Pustchow on 5 November 1839. She was twenty-five years, two months, and eleven days old. She was buried in the Hoff church cemetery on 8 November 1839. She left behind her husband, Carl Gottlieb, and two small children, August Friedrich Wilhelm, almost three years old, and a daughter, Albertine Maria Johanna Caroline, one-and-a-half years.

Like his older brother Johann Friedrich, Carl Gottlieb, thirty, remarried without much delay. His new wife, Wilhelmine Friedericke Wegner, also thirty, was the daughter of Martin Wegner from Duvenow. They were married in Pustchow on 14 February 1840.

On Palm Sunday, 4 April 1841, Maria Caroline Friederike Heuer, the youngest daughter of Martin and Louise Heuer and the only surviving sister of Johann Friedrich and Carl Gottlieb, was confirmed in Borntin. Her father's name was given as, "Martin Heuer *budner* from Borntin." On the same day at the same ceremony, Catharina Sophia's youngest brother, Friedrich Wilhelm August Ruhnke, was also confirmed. His father's name was recorded as, "Christian Ruhncke [sic] from Borntin." The confirmations were recorded in the Goerke church book.

During the next few years, many changes took place in the Heuer families. Johann Friedrich and Catharina Sophia had another son, Johann Friedrich, born 28 October 1842. Carl and Wilhelmine were the parents of twins, Gottlieb Ludwig and Johann David, born 15 June 1843.

The confirmation of Carl Friedrich Wilhelm, when he was fourteen years old, took place on 8 October 1843 in Borntin, with his father's name given as, "*budner* – Friedrich Heuer."

Ernestine Caroline Friedericke Heuer was born to Johann Friedrich and Catharina Sophia Heuer on 2 May 1845. Now there were four boys: Carl sixteen, August eight, Ferdinand six, and Johann Friedrich three, and two girls: Wilhelmine twelve and Ernestine.

On 8 September 1845, Carl and Wilhelmine had another son, Friedrich Ferdinand Wilhelm. Maria Caroline Friederike, on this record Caroline Marie, was one of the sponsors for his baptism in Pustchow. She was living and working in Schleffin (now Sliwin), a town also served by the Hoff Evangelische Church. She was eighteen years old.

Johann Friedrich's father, Martin Heuer, had been in failing health, and on 3 April 1847 he died at the age of seventy years and ten months. The cause of death was old age. His residence was noted as Borntin, and he was, "survived by his wife, Louise Brockhuss, from Neides." He was buried in the Goerke church cemetery.

In 1847, Wilhelmine Caroline Rosaline reached fourteen years of age and was confirmed on 10 October 1847, the day after her birthday. In the church record, her father's name is again written as, "Friedrich Heuer – *budner*."

In Pustchow, Carl and Wilhelmine had another child, a son, Joachim Carl Wilhelm Friedrich born 8 March 1848. He lived for only nine weeks and died 18 May 1848.

The year of 1848 brought another death to the Heuer family. Louise Brockhuss Heuer, widow of Martin Heuer and mother of Johann Friedrich, died on 24 August 1848. She was sixty-two years, eleven months, and five days old. Records stated, "she was a widow, she died of old age, and her survivors were two sons and a daughter." Strangely enough, no grandchildren were mentioned. By this time Johann Friedrich had six children and Carl Gottlieb had seven. Louise's one daughter, Maria Caroline Friederike, was twenty and not yet married. She continued to live in Schleffin, probably employed there as a servant.

Two more Heuer nieces were born in 1849. The first, Emilie Wilhelmine Seraphine, was born to Carl and Wilhelmine in Pustchow on 21 August 1849. Another child, Bertha Friedericke Sophie Heuer, was born 25 September 1849 to Johann Friedrich and Catharina Sophia. At her baptism in Borntin, her mother's younger brother, Friedrich Ruhnke, was a sponsor.

Carl Gottlieb, Johann Friedrich's only surviving brother, died on 28 March 1850 in Pustchow. He was only thirty-nine years, two months, and two days old. He was buried on 1 April 1850. Church death records stated, "he is survived by his widow and seven children – underage – out of first and second marriage."

Catharina Sophia's father, Christian Ruhnke, was living with his daughter's family as he had been for many years when his death occurred on 7 July 1850 in Borntin. His next of kin was listed as, "Heuer (Sophia) Borntin." He was eighty years old when he died. He was buried in the Goerke church cemetery.

Young August Ferdinand was confirmed in October 1850. He and August Hoppe, son of Martin Hoppe, were the only two in the class. In the church confirmation record, August Heuer's birthplace was listed as Tressin.

Sadly, Carl Friedrich Wilhelm Heuer – Johann's stepbrother – died at the age of twenty-one years, one month, and eight days on 20 December 1850, just a few days before Christmas. He had suffered a fatal heart attack that resulted in his death.



He was buried on 23 December 1850 in the Goerke church cemetery. In the Borntin church records during 1850 there were five recorded deaths. Carl's death, the fifth of that year, appeared on the same page of the death record book as that of his maternal grandfather, Christian Ruhnke.

Maria Caroline Friederike was now twenty-three and still living in Schleffin. Her relatives in Hoff were occupied as fishermen and tailors. It may have been through this connection that she met Hermann Friedrich Goetsch from Rensekow. Hermann was the only living son of Martin Gottlieb and Dorothea Louise Labs Goetsch, who had been married in Rensekow (now Rzeskowo) in 1827. They had a son, Heinrich Ferdinand born 10 November 1828, but he lived less than a year. Their second child, Hermann Friedrich was born 21 February 1831. He was baptized on 27 February and his sponsors were Johanna Labs, Martin Wilke, and Dorothea Marie Buege, wife of Martin Labs.

Hermann's mother, Dorothea Louise Labs Goetsch, died on 5 January 1851. That left Martin Gottlieb and his son, Hermann, without a housekeeper. This fact may have precipitated the marriage of Hermann and Maria Caroline Friederike Heuer. Whatever the reason, the banns for their marriage were published during the Advent season at both the Rensekow Evangelische Church and the Goerke Evangelische Church.

The marriage took place in Maria Caroline Friederike's home church in Goerke on 17 December 1852. Hermann, twenty-one, was listed as, "an apprentice tailor, the only son of Martin Gottlieb Goetsch." Maria Caroline Friederike, twenty-five, was named, "the only daughter of the late Martin Heuer, *budner*, from Borntin." The young couple would live in Rensekow with the widowed father, and Hermann would ply his trade as tailor.



Maria Caroline Friederike and Hermann Friedrich were married less than a year when Hermann's father died on 27 September 1853 from a, "debility of some sort." He was only fifty-two years old and his obituary stated, "he was survived by one son."

Their first child, a son, was born to Hermann and Maria Caroline on 15 November 1853. He was baptized Heinrich Friedrich Goetsch. The child's mother was recorded as Caroline Friedericke Heuer. This is just another of the many names recorded for Maria Caroline Friederike.

Johann Friedrich's son, Ferdinand Carl, was confirmed on 10 October 1853. His sister, Wilhelmine Caroline Rosaline, now age twenty, was living and working away from home. She was attending church in Klatkow, and was a baptismal sponsor for Marie Pauline Wilhelmine Hintz, the daughter of Johann Hintz and Friedericke Bischof, on 27 November 1854.

Another daughter was born to Johann Friedrich and Catharina Sophia Heuer. Augusta Marie Elizabeth was born 7 January 1855 in Borntin. She was the first child born in the Borntin congregation that year and was so noted in the record. She would be the last child for Johann Friedrich and Catharina Sophia Heuer.

Prussia had been changing since early in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Johann Friedrich had witnessed these subtle changes as had his father and grandfather before him. The idea of immigrating to the United States occupied the thoughts of many of the peasants, and some of them had already made their decision and left.



Beginning in the early 1700s, some Prussian landowners began to consolidate their holdings and the peasants suffered from it. Previously, a peasant who rented and farmed a plot of twelve or more acres was considered well off. When the landlords combined these smaller plots into larger, contiguous ones, it dispossessed many of the renters. This may have been the reason the Heuer family left Neides after living there for over 120 years, maybe even longer, and then moved at least six times before settling in Borntin.

*An old, abandoned well and fruit orchard outside the village of Borntin. (Courtesy of Suzanne Emelyn Heuer Vlach-1996)*

There were other changes, albeit subtle and over a long period, but they had their effect. Armed conflicts between the countries of Europe continued, bringing new laws and regulations, and higher taxes to support them. The conscription of young men was resented, and many of them would never return. If they were not needed at some far-off battleground, they were required to join the local militia. Additionally, the armies needed food and supplies, which were often confiscated from the peasants.

For centuries, a balance had existed between the size of the population, the amount of available land, its productivity, and a family's stability. A new trend was emerging in the population around the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Between 1750 and 1850, the population of the European continent leaped from 140 million to about 260 million. The cause of this radical

change was due in part to a decline in the death rate, particularly in that of children under two years.

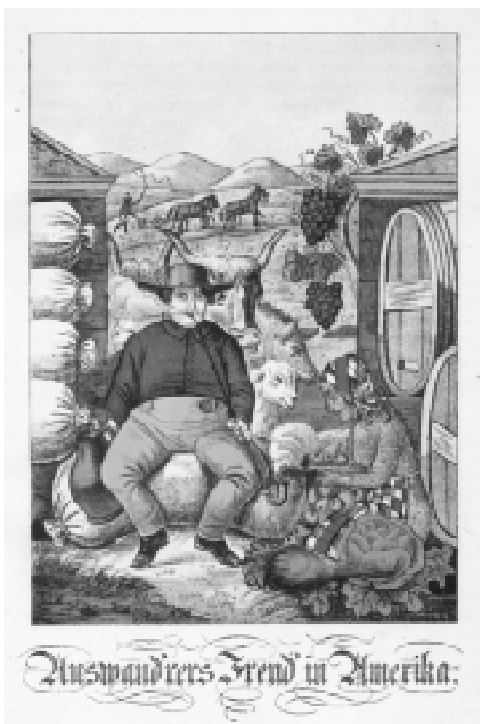
Because of improved sanitation and a greater understanding of infectious diseases, the newborns were stronger and were surviving, putting a strain on the whole family system and more pointedly, upon the village organization. A father's traditional obligation to provide for all his children became more burdensome at a time when his earning capacity was reduced. Some sons solved the problem by becoming migratory workers in the beet fields of the Ukraine or the wheat fields of Russia. Perhaps they found employment on the barges that plied the river to Danzig, while the rest of the family hung on to the land at home.

Without realizing it, the peasants themselves were part of the problem. Traditionally their holdings were divided into thirds: one-third for winter crops, wheat and rye; one-third for summer crops, barley, oats, and potatoes; and another third to lay fallow. Consider a landowner with holdings of three thousand acres, and one-third of that was lying unproductive each year. His concern about this problem was magnified when he heard about agrarian experiments in neighboring countries to increase fertility of the land, thereby providing more produce for trade. The peasant, however, was not easily swayed. His father, his grandfather, and generations before him had followed this method. Why should he now change?

Among the peasant class, there were many people who were fortunate enough to rent a large plot of land and they became farmers. Those not so fortunate became poorer and were literally pushed off their land. In Prussia they were known as *hauslers* or *budners*. Their only right was to rent the cottage in which they lived. They could use the common fields for grazing but lost the use of the wastelands that had provided them with firewood and lumber to build with. They made their living as day laborers for others or rented a small plot from a farmer for a short term.

One might ask why so many people like them left their ancestral homes in Europe during the 19<sup>th</sup> century. There were many reasons for Prussians, Germans, and other Europeans to emigrate to the United States. Historians who studied this phenomenon would say push-and-pull factors influenced the population. Push factors were described as those causes that drove people to leave and to undertake the risk of a dangerous sea journey to establish a new home in a strange land. Pull factors were those influences that attracted the immigrants to America.

For the Prussians with some resources, the existence of uncultivated land in America and public policies promoting settlement created opportunities for land ownership far beyond prospects in their native land. American states were advertising throughout Prussia in an attempt to promote the exciting new frontiers with opportunities to purchase and own acreage. This was a profitable marketing ploy that eventually attracted hundreds of thousands of people from Europe to America. Prussians were advised to bring Dutch money as it had the highest exchange rate in America.



"Emigrants Friend in America." *One of the advertisements for the "easy" life in America. (Museum of Hamburg History)*

Many of the emigrants believed that they could have a better life in America. There the streets were reputedly, "paved with gold," and there was a chance, if not for themselves, then for their children to have better economic futures. There were also those who left to join relatives, former neighbors, and friends who had already immigrated to the United States. Their persuasive letters communicated their satisfaction with life in their new surroundings. They were told that there was a lot of work in America. Young girls could work as maids, a respectable occupation, and be taken care of while earning up to \$5.00 per month. Mothers usually stayed home to look after the welfare of the family, but any unmarried persons accompanying their parents or relatives and friends, could be assured that there was work in America. Masons could earn \$1.25 per day, and stonemasons could earn even more.

The vast majority of emigrants came from small rural villages where there was insufficient farmland for all. Inheritance laws of the time caused many sons to leave home. Usually only one son inherited the entire farm property, and if there were brothers, they were excluded from making a living off agriculture. If and when the property was divided among all of the sons, the farm plots became too small to make any money off the land, which is why many peasants also practiced a trade. Therefore, the opportunity for land ownership in America was very appealing. This is what drew the millions of people to the United States, or in the language of the historians, the pull factors.

As with every important demographic movement, emigration did not have a single cause. Bad harvests with resultant rising food prices certainly provided an important impetus, and the effects were often cumulative rather than immediate. As transportation improved and popular knowledge about

the new world grew, economic and social pressures led ever more people to consider pulling up roots and leaving Europe.

In Europe, before 1800, only the very rich and the extraordinarily bold traveled with a serious purpose. Acceptance of

travel conditions changed when several large hotels were built to accommodate the throngs who wished to enjoy the mineral waters and gambling casinos that had once been the preserve of kings and noblemen. Tourists on their way to a spa, emigrants going to the New World, commercial travelers in search of sales, and laborers looking for work were all part of a growing stream of Europeans who moved from one place to another.

Roads in 1836 were considered exceptionally poor, and the usual speed of a journey could be no more than one kilometer per hour. By mid-century, however, the situation had improved, and most significantly in Prussia, where the length of hard-surface roads quadrupled. Additionally, general attitudes toward travel changed. Overall, the improvement in the roads would promote freedom, independence, and prosperity.

Transportation by water also improved with the removal of navigational hazards, tolls, and the rights of certain cities to unload and reshipe all merchandise that passed their docks. First under Napoleon and then under Prussian rule, these barriers were gradually removed from the Rhine River in Germany. At the same time, the arrival of the steam engine freed riverboats from dependence on the cumbersome system of men and animals used to tow them upstream. Water travel time increased from the rate of two or three kilometers per hour. By 1846, there were 180 steamers on German rivers, along with a network of canals connecting major waters extending from the Danube, the Weser, and the Elbe rivers.<sup>4</sup>

Finally, railroads were recognized as being highly efficient and soon became the most significant mode of transportation. The first German rail line opened in 1835, and by 1860, over 11,000 kilometers of track were in use.<sup>5</sup>

There had been a large emigration from Prussia to Australia and to America between 1837 and 1843. In 1835, King Frederick William III of Prussia merged the Lutheran – called Evangelische – and Reformed churches, thinking that this would help to unite the people. Instead, it especially angered the Lutherans who considered the differences between the two church denominations to be very significant in nature. Furthermore, they felt the unification movement was so unacceptable that many of the staunch Old Lutherans decided to leave their homes, families, and friends and seek religious freedom in America. They were willing to endure great hardships in order to be able to worship according to the dictates of their consciences. These emigrants left because of imposed changes in religious practices, and they felt a certain persecution had been visited upon them. The emigrants in this period were staunch advocates of religious freedom and included many clergy. For those who went to America, it did not take them long to encourage others to make the same decision. Old Lutheran immigrants from the same village or neighboring villages resettled in Buffalo, New York and Freistadt, Wisconsin, and they wrote letters to the relatives and friends they had left behind. None of these villages were in Kreis Greifenberg, nevertheless, the news spread by word of mouth. Some clergy even returned to their Prussian villages to provide first-hand accounts of what life was like in the new country. Undoubtedly many listened and were intrigued with the idea, not so much from a religious persecution standpoint, but from the freedom to own land and control their own destiny. In other words, after 1843, the emigrants were making the decision to undertake the journey for a better life, knowing full well that it was a huge gamble.

Frederick William III had died on 7 January 1840. He was succeeded by his son, Frederick William IV, who was cheered by the population for what they perceived as his liberal approach and apparent understanding of their concerns. Within a few years, his subjects became dissatisfied with his actions and began to revolt. The Prussian economy was in ruins. The peasants employed in the sweatshops of the large cities like Berlin began demonstrations against the king and called for a constitution. In 1848, the military was used to quell the rioting in Berlin, and the king even made an appearance to speak to the masses. He promised he would lead the movement for German unity and a constitution would be prepared. Unification would mean the end to either the Hapsburg (Austria) or Hohenzollern (Prussia) dynasties and it was clear that Frederick William IV was the more popular of the two houses, perhaps because of the superior military forces maintained by Prussia. A constitution was completed on 28 March 1849, fulfilling the concerns of the peasants. With unification in place, the economy once again rebounded.

When a large-scale emigration took place between 1845-1855, approximately one million Prussians/Germans, often skilled farmers or craftsmen, left for America. As it had been in the previous years of emigration, the three reasons for this mass emigration were: the avoidance of conscription into the Prussian Army; encouraging letters from family and friends in America as well as agents from Midwestern states who went to Pommern; and increased quality, ease, and availability of transportation. Although German emigration rose significantly in the 1850s, it reached an all-time high in 1882. The German statesman, Otto von Bismarck, described these America-bound migrants as, "...two kinds of immigrants – those who emigrate because they still have money enough...and those who now have money enough."

Johann Friedrich and Catharina Sophia may have agonized over the idea of emigrating for several years, or leaving might have been a spur of the moment decision brought about by some event, discussion, or the receipt of a letter from a relative or friend who had gone before. We suspect all of these circumstances assisted in the conclusion they would emigrate. Once they decided to move to America, all the traditions associated with their Prussian heritage would disappear forever. Emigration would take this family out of comfortable, although far from luxurious, ways of life and accustomed environments and replant them in strange and sometimes hostile surroundings. Customary modes of behavior would be suspended and new ones would take their place.

Their oldest daughter, Wilhelmine Caroline Rosaline, twenty-two, married a twice-married, once-widowed and once-

separated man named Peter Bergin who was nearly forty-five years old, on 16 November 1855. Peter Bergin left an impression of a footloose, adventurous individual who could have planted the thought of emigration in Johann Friedrich's mind. They were nearly the same age, with Johann Friedrich being two years older than Peter. The events that unfolded certainly seemed to be well planned and thought-out before the journey began. By the end of 1856, Johann Friedrich, Catharina Sophia, their six children, and Peter and Wilhelmine knew they were going to America.

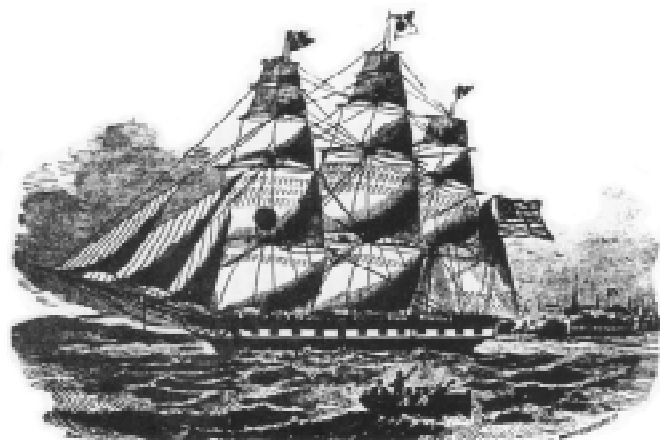
One other factor may have helped them decide when they left: mainly when they would not have to leave many close relatives behind. Of those in Johann Friedrich's family, none remained except Johann Friedrich's young sister, Maria Caroline Friederike, who in 1856 was twenty-nine, married, and provided for. In Catharina Sophia's family, all her brothers were married and on their own.



An 1855 advertisement regularly seen in German newspapers, placed there by the port cities of Antwerp and Le Havre, to lure emigrants. (Museum of Hamburg History)

was still an element of doubt about the conditions to be found in the United States. The Heuer family may have been skeptical of the glowing reports sent by recent emigrants and the agents sent by the states eagerly awaiting new settlers. They obviously felt comfortable that Peter could survive the trip and provide them with an honest appraisal of the conditions they would have to endure, both on the voyage and in America. This knowledge would give them a tremendous advantage in planning for their crossing. With all of this in mind, Peter left Wilhelmine and the Heuer family in Borntin in early January 1857 and traveled to Antwerp, Belgium, where he boarded the packet ship *Isaac Bell* bound for New York City.

The *Isaac Bell* was built in America in the late 1840s. It was built by William Webb in the huge New York City shipyard complex, covering a one-mile stretch along the East River, from Grand Street to 13th Street. Webb's father, Isaac Webb, was one of the early shipbuilders in New York City, along with Jacob Bell and Stephen Smith. Isaac Webb was a shipwright of Scottish descent, who, like Bell and Smith, had moved from Stamford, Connecticut to seek his fortune in New York City. Isaac Webb first served with the shipbuilder Henry Eckford before setting up his own yard. However, his chief contribution to maritime development lay in the fact that he trained two youths who became the greatest American shipbuilders of their time. One was his son, William, the other was Donald McKay. William Webb studied naval architecture and shipbuilding for six years, then started building ships at the age of twenty-one. His first product was the packet sailing ship *Oxford* in 1836, built under a subcontract from his father for the Black Ball Line, a sailing company managed in Liverpool, England by Baring Brothers. He then went on to build another vessel for the same line, the *New York*, followed by the *Pennsylvania*, *Vile de Lyons*, and *Duchess of Orleans*, before his father's death in 1840. Then he became a partner of his father's assistant, Allen. In 1843, Webb started twenty-five years of building in his own name. Among the great packet ships he produced were the *Yorkshire*, *Guy Mannering* – the first three-decker –



The Black Ball Line packet ship Isaac Webb, shown here, was very similar to the *Isaac Bell*. Both ships were built by William Webb in the late 1840s. (*Passage to the New World*, page 91)

*Ocean Monarch, Isaac Wright, Ivanhoe, Yorktown, and Isaac Bell.* The owners of these ships made a point of advising the public that their ships were American built because it was well-known that the shipwrights in the United States were then building some of the finest sailing vessels ever produced.<sup>6</sup>

The *Isaac Bell* was a smaller, three-masted sailing ship. Peter Bergin was one of only forty passengers when it departed in early January 1857. The North Atlantic is notorious for very rough seas and frequent stormy weather with high velocity, bone-chilling winds during this time of year. Peter's voyage was probably not very pleasant, but he had only himself to worry about. Most of the passengers were listed as farmers with a few others designated as joiner, carpenter, peddler, mason, weaver, saddler, doctor, and baker. Only six of the forty were children under ten years old.

The *Isaac Bell* arrived in New York City on 20 February 1857. From New York, Peter made his way northwest to the large German settlement at Buffalo where he found many travelers who spoke his language and were willing to help him. He was also very thankful they were there, as Buffalo in February can be brutally cold. He promptly joined St. Peter's Evangelical Lutheran Church. Peter undoubtedly wrote to Johann Friedrich, telling him of his journey and advising the family to follow. He also began working to pay his room and board and to save some money for the arrival of Wilhelmine, her parents, and brothers and sisters. There is little doubt he sent letters to Wilhelmine to tell her all about this new land. One can imagine that it was a lonely but exciting existence.

In Borntin the Heuer family was completing plans for the long journey ahead. It seems likely that Wilhelmine, pregnant with her first child, was included in the preparations of procuring passports, sorting possessions, buying trunks, and whatever was necessary from what they had been told by Peter and those who had already experienced the journey. Among the limited items the family took with them was Johann Friedrich's wooden box of hand-made carpentry tools.

It is not known how the Heuer family was able to finance their trip to America. Some sources indicate the fare was \$60.00 per individual to cross the Atlantic. Another \$40.00 would pay the fare to Wisconsin from New York. Passage fares for Johann Friedrich, his wife, Catharina Sophia, and six children surely must have been the result of years of saving and frugal living. Perhaps they had some meager assets to dispose of, which could have netted them the cost of the fares. It is doubtful that they owned any land in Prussia, but they could have owned animals and farming tools, which they sold. Their remaining belongings were carried with them, stuffed into trunks and valises.

Emigrants often faced a complicated, trying journey simply to get to a major seaport from which ships bound for America would sail. Whether it be Bremen, Hamburg, or Antwerp, each port was overwhelmed with the huge numbers of people that descended upon it. If any one trait distinguished the America-bound migrant, it was probably the sheer courage to leave behind all that was familiar and strike out for a world of unknowns. Even when emigrants knew that some security – in the form of familiar faces or jobs or both – awaited them across the Atlantic, the voyage itself remained a daunting prospect.

Prior to 1832, German government officials tended to view the America-bound traffic as a problem of the shippers, who were bridging the Atlantic with cargoes of cotton, tobacco, grain, and timber and seeking additional profits from emigrants on the return trip. As the emigrant business increased, some ports had entire city blocks comprised of establishments totally devoted to it.

Bremen became a model for handling the emigrants. It was the first German city to establish a very deliberate policy of protection for emigrants, resulting in some positive consequences for its economy. Merchants built a model lodging house for travelers, and official information booths were established to provide honest advice.

A decree issued by the Bremen authorities in 1832 created an obligation for shipowners to certify the seaworthiness of their vessels, to keep passenger lists, to post schedules, and to keep provisions on board for ninety days. For those reasons, many early emigrants chose to leave from Bremen rather than Hamburg or other ports; but by 1857, most of the major ports had adopted the decree of 1832. Between 1832 and 1835, about 38,500 people emigrated through the Bremen port. This mass exodus made fortunes for ship owners who converted their ships for human transport.

Even though Hamburg had been opposed to emigration traffic as early as 1817 and continued that policy until 1837, the city council soon saw the positive effects that the business of emigration brought to the economy of Bremen. The emigrants, between their arrival and departure by ship, had to stay in the port's lodging houses and feed themselves, while the emigrant



*Johann Friedrich's toolbox and carpentry tools he brought with him from Borntin, Prussia. (Courtesy of Ronald Henry Heuer-2000. The tools are in his possession)*

ships had to purchase substantial quantities of provisions. In 1837, the Hamburg City Council passed a decree conforming essentially with the Bremen regulations of 1832 and in certain aspects, it was more detailed. As an example, the Hamburg City Council specified the space entitlement of each passenger, the size of the bunks and the type and quantity of provisions to be taken on the voyage.

In the announcement of voyage conditions of the *Hamburg–Amerikanische Packetfahrt–Actien–Gesellschaft* (HAPAG) of January 1850, the following is how the passengers were fed on board according to Hamburg regulations.

The passengers from the day of embarkation to the day of disembarkation at the port of destination receive free board on the scale usual on seagoing ships. This consists of sustaining and nutritious food such as salt beef, salt pork, herrings, peas, beans, pearl barley, groats, rice, sauerkraut, butter, plums, pastries, pudding, etc., all in sufficient quantity and of the best quality. Coffee is served in the mornings, and in the evenings tea and ship's bread with butter...In accordance with the decree of the local authority, the ships are provisioned for 90 days so that the passengers will not lack for anything on the longest voyage.

What was advertised did not always mirror the actual conditions on the ships. The quality of the provisions taken on board also suffered from the lengthy voyages of the sailing ships – the average time for crossing was forty-three days – and from the completely inadequate food preservation methods of that time. Apart from the fact that the food was highly monotonous, the bread was usually moldy by the end of the longer voyages, the butter rancid, and the water almost undrinkable.

Most emigrants arrived in Hamburg or Bremen by rail. Prior to the reforms of 1832 in Bremen and of 1850 in Hamburg, before the emigrants could step from the cars, they were assaulted by the landlords who vigorously competed for their lodging and meal accommodations. Very often it was the so-called *litzer* – the literal translation is ribboners – who handled this business. They also represented and worked for the clerks of the shipping lines, for moneychangers, for stores selling utensils for the voyage, and anything else that was even remotely related to an ocean voyage. They were paid a commission for each customer they produced. The emigrants, who were not familiar with Hamburg conditions, were frequently the victims of fraudulent practices. They were charged inflated prices for board and lodging and were sold impractical utensils for the voyage.

These practices were curbed in 1850 when an Association for the Protection of Emigrants was founded in Hamburg. Its goal was to provide arriving emigrants with information free-of-charge about all procedures connected with emigration and to protect them from the ribboners. An Emigration Information Office was established for this purpose in 1851. Its staff provided the emigrants on their arrival with information on the average price of board and lodging, baggage handling, the necessary utensils for the voyage, the current rates of exchange, and the different types of passage to America. The Information Office improved Hamburg's reputation as an emigration port and by 1854, the number of people leaving from that city was seven times that of 1850. In April of 1855, the Hamburg City Council established an Emigration Deputation, which took over the Information Office of the Association with its complete staff. Now a state-run agency, the Deputation had the authority to make regulations, and no time was lost in making rules that forbid entry to the railroad station by ribboners and landlords. The accommodations for emigrants awaiting departure were allocated to licensed landlords who were supervised by Hamburg authorities and inspected at least once a month. The conditions for emigrants had improved considerably in both Hamburg and Bremen by 1857 when the Heuer family would arrive.

Sometimes families were forced to remain for weeks in port when adverse weather delayed or canceled departures. Entire funds could be depleted while waiting for vessels to carry them to America. Such delays must have been very painful for a farmer hoarding as much money as possible for his tract of American soil. If \$1.25 would buy an acre in Wisconsin, that amount, spent in Bremen, Hamburg, Antwerp, or another port would be an acre lost. The Heuer family may have known all of this, or none of it, but it did not matter as they were committed to go.

The Heuer family: Johann Friedrich, Catharina Sophia, Wilhelmine, August, Ferdinand, Johann, Ernestine, Bertha, and Augusta began the journey in early April 1857 when they left Borntin for Hamburg. No doubt a tearful parting marked the Heuer's departure from family, native villages, and homeland. They were moving far across a great span of land and water to another continent, never to return! Maria Caroline Friederike Heuer Goetsch, pregnant with another child, bade farewell to her only living brother and surviving family member, Johann Friedrich, her sister-in-law Catharina Sophia, and their seven children. This was a wrenching moment since all knew they were not likely to see one another again. Remaining relatives expressed thoughts and hopes for a safe journey and wishes for the realization of their loved-ones' dreams.



Front page of the Hamburg Directive for Emigrants of 1851. (Museum of Hamburg History)



*Card of a Hamburg lodging house billed as the “National Emigrants – House” and featuring three classes of lodging. (Museum of Hamburg History)*

The first leg of their journey might have been by wagon to the nearest train station, and then by train to the northwest coast on the Atlantic. They could also have traveled to the nearest port on the Baltic Sea, boarded a ship, and sailed



*A family room in the HAPAG'S emigrant barracks – the alternative to the lodging houses. (Museum of Hamburg History)*

to the Atlantic port of Hamburg, the port from which one-fourth of all emigrants leaving Europe would eventually depart.

There is no explanation in the records for what happened next, but common sense and logic may provide the answer. Upon reaching Hamburg, they went to the port and checked the ship departure schedules. They found the ship *Weser* ready to sail in a few days, but it did not have remaining space to take all nine of the Heuer family. The next ship scheduled to depart was the *Laura*, but it was leaving five days

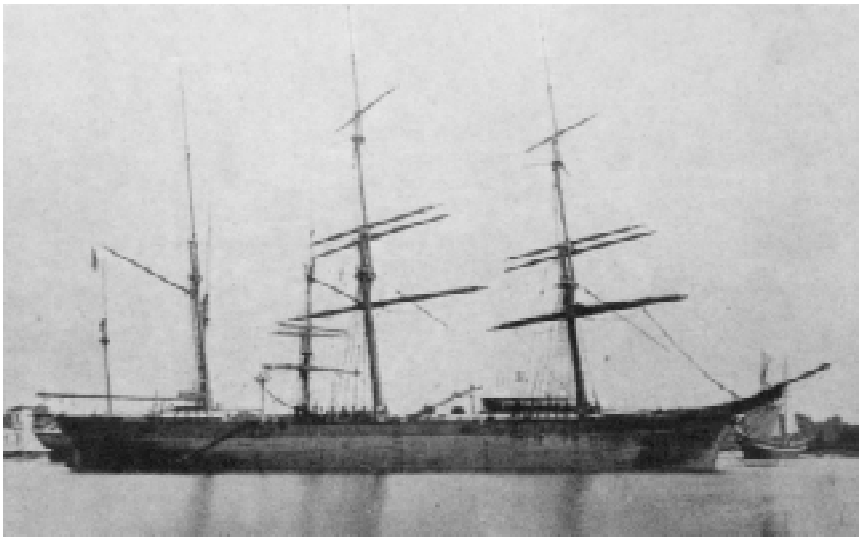


*The buildings on the Grosser Grasbrook were the final clearance facilities and the embarkation point at Hamburg for the crossing to America until the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. (Museum of Hamburg History)*

later from Bremen, only seven miles southwest of Hamburg, and it was a smaller vessel.

The *Weser* was originally named the *Peter Goddefroy* when it was launched on 7 August 1851 at Stockholm, Sweden. It was built by Johann Weillbach for the Hamburg firm of Johann Ces. Goddefroy and Sohn. Originally rigged as a ship and later as a bark, its first master, H. E. Decker, sailed the *Peter Goddefroy* from Bremen to New Orleans in 1851 and 1852. Then, from 1852 to 1855, the ship sailed between Sunderland and Antwerp, stopping at intermediate ports along the way. Master S. Johannsen took the helm in 1855. During 1855 and 1856, his route was to Melbourne, Adelaide, the Chincha Islands off the coast of Peru and the Port of Callao, in Lima, Peru, South America. The ship undoubtedly carried guano – sea bird droppings that for centuries had built up on the rocky Chincha Islands to a depth of 100 feet – being hauled to European and American ports to be used as fertilizer. The stench had to be endured by the crew but the cargo had great value. Once used to haul this cargo usually rendered the ship unuseable for carrying passengers without a complete overhaul.

On 4 April 1857 the ship was sold to Hamburg America Line, known in Hamburg as HAPAG, and renamed *Weser*. It was re-rigged as a ship and was about 150 feet in length, thirty feet in width, with its depth of hold being twenty-two feet. The *Weser* had accommodations for approximately forty passengers in first and second class cabins and 250 in steerage with

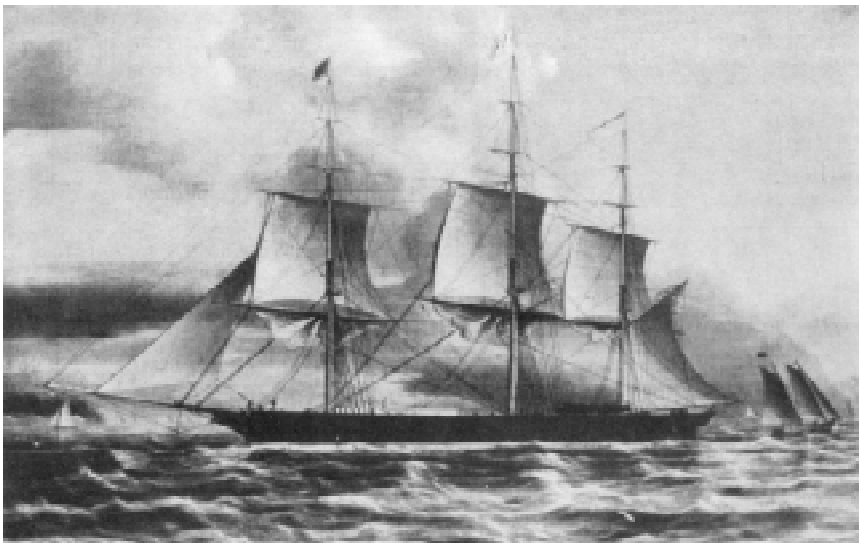


Shown is the Swedish bark Edward, later renamed Competitor. It was very similar in size and design to the Weser. (From a photograph made at Stavanger, Sweden)

each of whom held a half share. Wilmsen was later succeeded by Louis Schmidt, also of Vegesack, who turned over the helm to Wilhelm Wilmsen in 1867. On 22 September 1866, on a voyage from Bremen to Baltimore with 210 passengers, the *Laura* was severely damaged by a hurricane, during the course of which eight passengers were swept overboard and drowned. But the *Laura* survived the ordeal and in 1874, was sold to M. L. Stranne of Foglavik, Sweden, who renamed her *Josefina*. Her new master was O. Berndtsson. On 24 January 1877, the *Josefina* arrived at Buenos Aires from Bourdeaux. While unloading her cargo, the ship caught fire and became a total loss.

The Heuer family and Wilhelmine had a decision to make. For all to depart on the *Laura*, the delay might have meant Wilhelmine would deliver her baby on board ship before reaching America. This was not an acceptable situation. The *Weser's* accommodations and services were better because this vessel was clearly refitted as a passenger ship and may have even included a ship's doctor. There may also have been relatives or friends of the Heuer's on the *Weser* that could, and certainly would have assisted her, but none have been identified in the 411 total passengers on board including children. Although the *Weser* had accommodations for about 300 passengers total, that number did not include children under a certain unknown age who probably slept with their parents.

The decision was made to send Wilhelmine on the *Weser* to provide her the chance of reaching New York or Buffalo before she gave birth. Perhaps that is why Wilhelmine departed Hamburg alone on the ship *Weser*, its first voyage under that name, on 16 April 1857 and arrived in New York on 1 June 1857. The voyage had taken forty-five days.



The Black Ball Line packet Neptune, shown above, was slightly larger than the *Laura*, but was representative of the immigrant ships of the period. (Painting by John E. C. Peterson in 1866)

a crew of twenty. The ship's master, C. F. C. Fischer, sailed the *Weser* from Hamburg to New York on 16 April 1857 on its first voyage for the Hamburg America Lines. In 1858, the *Weser* was lost after being stranded on the west coast of Ireland.

The *Laura* was a bark, a three-masted sailing vessel with the front two (foremast and mainmast) square-rigged, while the sternmast (mizzenmast) was rigged fore-and-aft. The *Laura* was built by Peter Sager of Vegesack, Germany and launched on 26 March 1857. The ship was about 120 feet in length, twenty-eight feet wide, with a depth of hold being fifteen feet. She was jointly owned by H. von Fischer of Bremen, and her master, Hans Jurgen Wilmsen of Vegesack,

Johann Friedrich and his family proceeded to Bremen where they boarded the *Laura*. The *Laura* loaded 225 passengers, 158 of them adults of seventeen years and older and sixty-seven children under the age of seventeen, including eleven infants, three of whom were only three months old. The Heuers were listed as passengers number 208 through 215 on the ship's manifest, indicating they were in the cheapest accommodations provided – in steerage – probably one deck below the main deck and near or under the waterline. They were correctly, or incorrectly in some cases, listed as follows on the *Laura's* manifest, signed by the ship's captain, Master Hans Jurgen Wilmsen:



Passenger Number	Names	Age Yrs. / Mnth.	Sex	Occupation	Country to which they severally belong	Country in which they intend to become inhabitants	Died on Voyage	Part of vessel occupied during voyage
208	Fredr. Heuser	49	Male	Unknown	Germany	U.S. of America		Steerage
209	Sophie Heuser	21	Female	Unknown	Germany	U.S. of America		Steerage
210	Auguste Heuser	18	Female	Unknown	Germany	U.S. of America		Steerage
211	Ferd. Heuer	14	Male	Unknown	Germany	U.S. of America		Steerage
212	Fred Heuer	11	Male	Unknown	Germany	U.S. of America		Steerage
213	Caroline Heuer	9	Female	Unknown	Germany	U.S. of America		Steerage
214	Bertha Heuer	2	Female	Unknown	Germany	U.S. of America		Steerage
215	August Heuer	19	Female	Unknown	Germany	U.S. of America		Steerage

*Extraction from the original Laura Manifest.*

Presumably, they were manifested in the order they boarded. The person writing the manifest may not have understood the spelling when Johann Friedrich provided him his surname, Catharina Sophia's, and little Augusta. He wrote it Heuser. When Ferdinand stepped up, he gave his name, and it was written as Heuer for the remaining family members. Catharina Sophia would have been flattered had she known her age was listed as twenty-one when she was really forty-nine, and the infant she was carrying, Augusta, was two-and-one-half years old, not the eighteen months recorded. Ferdinand was seventeen; Johann Friedrich (here shortened to the English Fred) was fourteen; Caroline, really Ernestine, was twelve. Bertha, being ushered along by August, was eight years old. August, the oldest child of the family present, boarded last and suffered two errors at the hand of the writer. He was really twenty-one years old and certainly not a female. Nevertheless, that is how it was recorded. And the *Laura's* master dutifully signed this essential historical document, probably without ever seeing the cargo.

The manifest also contained some other interesting information, but it is difficult to believe all of it is accurate. Among the 225 passengers there were: thirty-four farmers; three blacksmiths; four shoemakers; one tailor, painter, mason, saddler, doctor, weaver, miller, and student; two carpenters and bakers; and three mechanics. For the manifest, to be listed as a child, they had to be under the age of ten years. Some of those farmers listed were fourteen years old. The largest category, yet unmentioned, was "Unknown," which meant no occupation was recorded. And all women were included as unknown since they were housewives with no recognized occupation. Perhaps the writer forgot to ask each person, did not understand if told, or most likely, if the individual did not offer an occupation it meant less writing. The further down the manifest, the more often unknown was listed, including all of the "Heusers" and Heuers. This kind of record keeping raised questions as to whether our government had any clue as to who entered the country.

The manifest also recorded the passengers as being from Germany even though the political boundaries of Germany did not exist until 1871. But the term – Germany – had been used for nearly 2,000 years, from the date of the early German tribes, through the European empire called the Holy Roman Empire of the German nation, until the hundreds of small and large independent units, principalities, and city republics were slowly organized into regional states in the north, south, and southeast of Europe. Germans who emigrated from Germany to America prior to 1871 had passports of various states such as Prussia, Bavaria, Saxony, and Württemberg. To the ship's manifest keeper, they were all Germans, no matter what part of the geographical German territory or states they came from. Besides, it was probably easier to record it that way and much less complicated.

Once on board the *Laura*, the Heuers were directed to their accommodations: the women and very young children to one area and the men and boys to another. It does not take much of an imagination to understand why this was necessary. Any differences in the bathroom facilities, or the sleeping areas, as well as the overall accommodations, were negligible. Although the new steamship vessels boasted of twenty-five knot cruising speeds and space enough for 3,000 hapless souls, the reality was much different on the sail-powered *Laura*. None of the ships offered luxurious accommodations to these large groups of emigrant families. The "Passage to Paradise" and the emigration to America was accomplished with a great deal of self-sacrifice. The *Laura* sailed from Hamburg on or about 20 April 1857.

Until the mid-nineteenth century, sailing ships would carry cargo from America to Europe where the holds would be hastily converted for passengers on the return trip. The holds were often equipped with wood-framed bunks stacked five high and three across. Diseases were prevalent among travelers. Food was nearly inedible. Most travelers could not afford

the extravagant fare and were compelled to travel third class or steerage. Due to the large numbers of sick people and disease-carriers arriving at ports of entry, the federal government of the United States recognized the appalling conditions on immigrant ships and in 1819, the first law concerning immigration was passed. It set standards for steerage conditions on sailing vessels but unfortunately, they were not vigorously enforced.

Deep inside the lower section of the ship was the steerage deck, often only five- to six- feet in height. Each ship, of course, was configured differently, and no records have yet been found to tell us exactly how good, or how bad, the *Laura* really was. The fact that she was a newly built ship should indicate that she was outfitted with the latest and best accommodations. But with profit as the focus of her owners, corners may have been severely cut.



*Between-decks space called "Steerage" was often not as roomy as the interior of the emigrant ship Samuel Hop shown above. Note the numbers on the bunks. (Museum of Hamburg History)*

Herman Melville, the famous author, signed on as a sailor in 1839 aboard the *St. Lawrence* from New York to Liverpool, England and back. He compared the steerage bunks – coarse planks rapidly knocked together – to dog kennels. A bunk would usually be all of eighteen inches wide with barely three feet of headroom. Each bunk had a thin, straw-filled mattress and a flimsy blanket. The ships were loaded to capacity, and the unfortunate travelers were packed in like sardines.

The decks in steerage were freshly whitewashed, and the spaces fumigated at the end of each journey. However, facilities were so primitive that during a subsequent voyage, within a few days, conditions reverted to a foul, odorous state. Sometimes, after repeated ocean voyages, the wooden decking on some ships became grossly impregnated with the repugnant stench from human and animal cargoes. The permeated wood defied all cleaning and whitewashing, and there was nothing left to do but destroy the ship. The shipowners were wealthy enough to replenish their fleet with newer, faster, and more modern ships. By the 1850s, many of those conditions had been corrected but not eliminated.

Passenger lines promoted their, "excellent and nutritious food," but reality was somewhat different. The emigrants soon learned to expect some kind of lukewarm potato soup, some kind of fish with loaves of stale, black bread. Beer had been promised in the advertisements, but like drinking water, it was available only if they had the money to spend for it.

Down in steerage quarters where the Heuer family was surely confined, the passengers were continuously tossed about, the rolling and pitching increased violently during any kind of storm, making conditions almost unbearable. Very few passengers escaped being seasick. Women were especially susceptible to this malady, and for days on end would lie in their bunks and moan. If they were not sick, the best place to be during the day was the main deck where some people played cards, read, or talked. Some whiled away the voyage playing games and singing; they wrote letters; women got on with their sewing. Devout travelers turned to the Bible or to prayer for reassurance, while more worldly individuals looked for flirtations and other distractions. Best of all was fresh air to breathe on the open main deck, when they were allowed to go there.

There is little doubt the ocean passage included an education for all who survived it. Besides the pure experience of the

voyage, there was much to be learned and taken in. The adult passengers, in both male and female accommodations, swapped life stories while the young boys and girls listened intently. No doubt the question, “What is your plan when we get there?” was asked often, and the answer usually was filled with great expectations. Hope and confidence for the future prevailed, providing an air of excitement that transcended the humilities of the voyage. Unspoken was the anxiety and doubt that frequently crossed the minds of those who had made the decision. For the Heuers, who already had a family member, Peter Bergin, in the United States, the only thought that preoccupied them was their arrival in New York City.

New York City has always been the port of entry for the largest number of immigrants. Of the 5,400,000 people who arrived in the United States between 1820 and 1860, more than two-thirds entered at New York. By the 1850s, New York was receiving more than three-quarters of the national total of immigrants, and by the 1890s, more than four-fifths.

There was much trepidation because stories had circulated on the ship of the perils of the reception center in New York Harbor called Castle Garden and sometimes called by its earlier name, Castle Clinton. There would be medical examiners who had the power to turn them back if they did not measure-up physically.

Between 1855 and 1890, Castle Garden, an offshore circular structure, was used as an immigration processing center. This was the place where the Heuer family, along with millions of other immigrants, would be first processed as they arrived in America. They were, of course, ignorant of the history of Castle Garden. All they knew was that Castle Garden offered newcomers initial protection from “runners” who preyed upon the foreign populace. The site had been built between 1807-11 as a fort – Fort Clinton – to defend the approaches to the harbor. Ceded to New York City by the federal government in 1822, it was renamed and became a resort and concert hall. As Castle Garden, it was the scene of notable public and social events. Professor Morse demonstrated the telegraph there in 1835, and in 1850, under the sponsorship of P. T. Barnum, Jenny Lind, “The Swedish Nightingale,” made her American debut.

As the growth of New York City moved away from the waterfront, the buildings at Castle Garden fell into disuse. Its days as the most popular amusement place for the city were numbered because the city’s immigration officials needed a waterfront location to serve as a port of entry. As a result in 1855, the red granite brick buildings, with their circular walls, nine feet thick, massive bolt-studded doors, and gun embrasures, were taken over by the New York State Immigration Commission. On 1 August 1855, Castle Garden processed its first immigrants. From that year until 1891, approximately seven and one-half million aliens were processed at Castle Garden, and the Johann Friedrich Heuer family became part of those statistics when they arrived in New York in 1857.

Overcrowding at Castle Garden was almost impossible to correct as the flood of immigrants grew. Overwhelmed New York State officials, in charge of immigration at the port, often abused their authority. Finally in 1890, Governor Cleveland called for an investigation. At the end of the investigation, the immigration reception was transferred to a commissioner at Ellis Island in 1891, and Castle Garden was forever closed as a reception center.

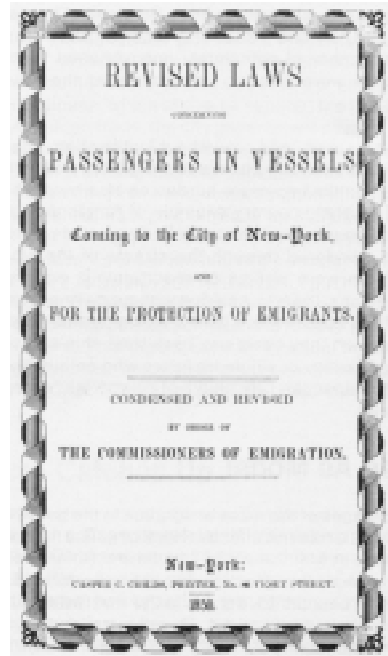


*Immigrants on the deck of a sailing ship scan the horizon for their first glimpse of America. (New York Public Library Pictorial Collection)*

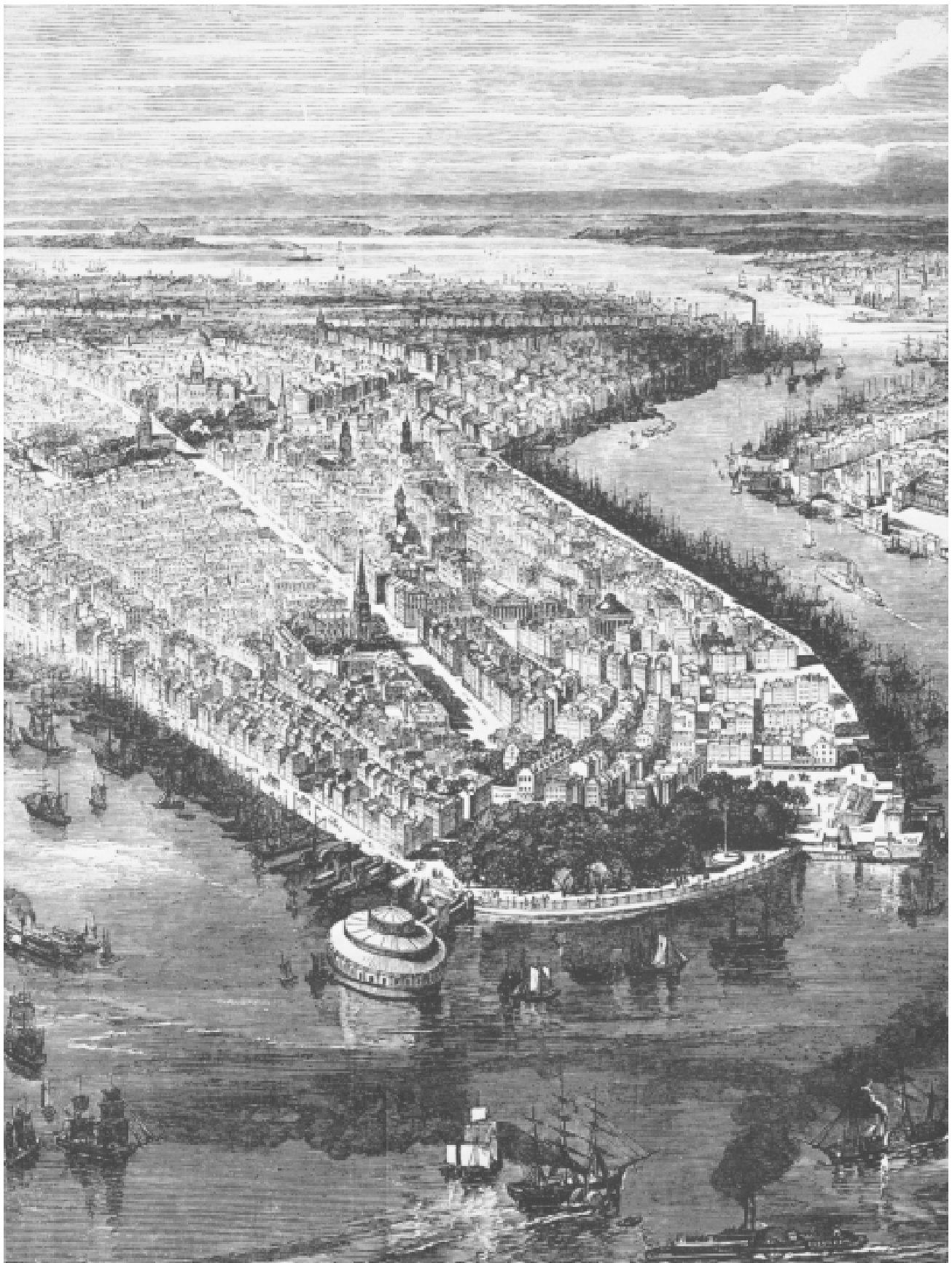
On the *Laura*, as the long voyage neared its end, the anxiety and joy began to heighten. Land had already been seen on the horizon when a small boat met the ship, dropping off the harbor pilot who would sail her into the port. There is no way of knowing if the passengers were allowed on the main deck when the skyline of New York City came into view. If they were, the sight of this huge city, with its majestic, massive buildings, must have been awesome to these people who had lived most of their lives in the country. By 1857, New York City was already a major city of the world. If there had been any doubt about their decision to emigrate, it must have been dispelled, at least for the moment.

None of these early immigrants saw the famed Statue of Liberty. That imposing 300-foot-high statue, commemorating the friendship between the peoples of France and the United States, would not be dedicated until 28 October 1886. Its inscribed message, “Give me your tired, poor, huddled masses yearning to breath free” might have had more meaning for those who came before it became the beacon for future immigrants.

The *Laura* arrived in New York Harbor on 5 June 1857 and dropped



*Front page of the New York Immigration Laws of the year 1850. (Museum of Hamburg History)*

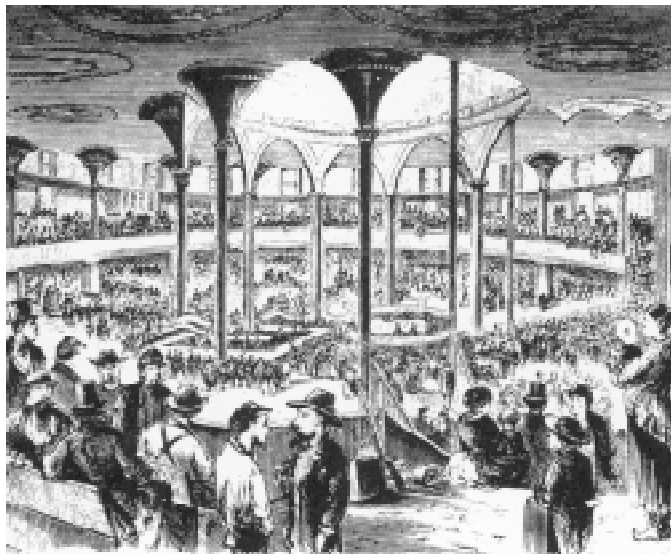


*Castle Garden, the circular structure jutting out into the Hudson River, was on the southern tip of Manhattan. (New York Public Library Picture Collection)*

her anchor. The voyage had taken forty-five days. On board, all passengers prepared themselves for an inspection of the ship by a doctor. Old clothes were discarded overboard or packed, if still useful, to be replaced with fresh suits and dresses. After the doctor's visit, another boat came alongside to off-load all hold baggage and transport it to the luggage warehouses at the processing center. Then the passengers disembarked onto open barges for the trip to the Castle Garden pier. On the way, the immigrants were able to get a closer look at the scenery; the hundreds of ships and boats anchored there; and the churches, public buildings, factories, stores, apartments, and other structures they passed. But none of those would catch the attention of the immigrants like Castle Garden as it loomed into view.



*Ships anchored in the harbor, and after customs officers had inspected baggage on board, two 150-ton barges ferried immigrants to the dock. (From Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper, November 23, 1878. New York Historical Society)*



*The interior of Castle Garden, drawn for Harper's in 1871, was always crowded. The floor of the rotunda was divided into separate areas for English-speaking immigrants (mainly Irish) and others, and was estimated to hold anywhere from 2,000 to 4,000 people. (New York Public Library Picture Collection)*

Once all of the passengers were off the barges and assembled by the processing staff, they moved up the corridor as one body into the interior of the cavernous building. They took seats under the glass dome in the center of the large hall while the dozen or more staff members made preparations for their arrival processing. Each immigrant – man, woman, and child – moved up to the counter to give the registrar his or her name, place of birth, age, and occupation. The registrar checked the information against the ship's manifest and gave each person a paper tag, which became their identification for the processing. It consisted of the manifest page number and the line number their name happened to be on. When all had been processed, an officer from the Bureau of Information mounted an elevated rostrum to address the group. He welcomed them and provided information about travel arrangements to their destinations and assistance that would be given those who needed it. All of this, of course, had to be translated for those who spoke

no English.

Clutching their number and carrying their baggage, the Heuer family and other eager passengers were then taken to the examination room, and if they passed, they were given a landing card and were finally admitted to America. They were especially worried about the infamous eye examinations. If they did not pass that test, they were not going to be admitted. It was also necessary to be very careful about stating intentions in the new country. If they already had a position lined up, they might be refused admittance because they would be taking the job from an American. Applicants were very careful as they were being processed. Many of them, after being passed by the examiners, fell on their knees and thanked God that they had finally arrived in “the land of the free and the home of the brave.” These weary travelers had reached for the stars by coming to America.

Since the processing of the numerous immigrants took considerable time, many of them spent the night on the hard wooden benches of Castle Garden. But even that hardship was endured without complaint because the worries of processing were behind them.

Wilhelmine had arrived four days earlier on the *Weser*. It is possible that Peter had received word about her arrival and met the ship in New York City. They may have waited in New York for the *Laura* to arrive, or Wilhelmine might have traveled to Buffalo alone and reunited with Peter there. In that case, Wilhelmine certainly would have left word for the Heuer family. New York City was a dirty, urban place

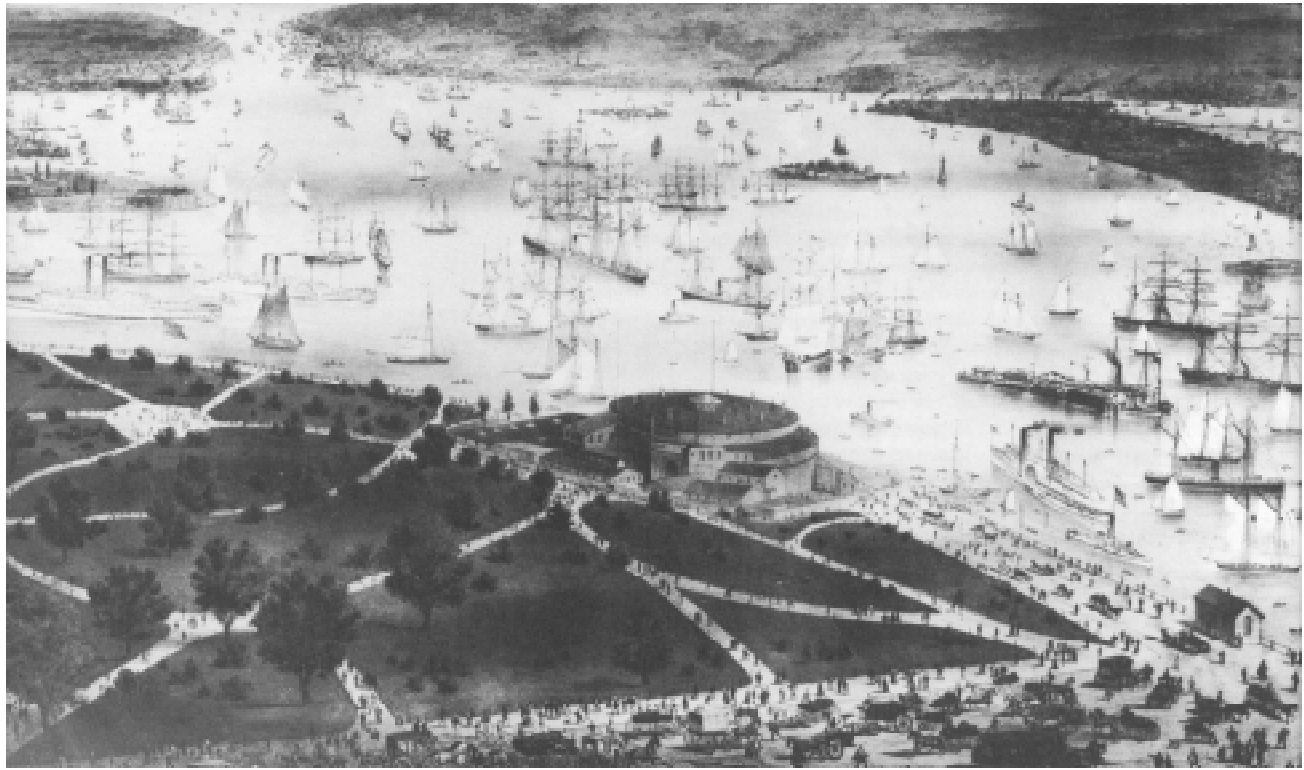


*A clerk registered immigrants at a desk in Castle Garden's main rotunda after they had passed medical inspection. He asked each immigrant's name, nationality, former residence, and intended destination. (Drawn for Harper's, March, 1871. New York Public Library Picture Collection)*



*Registration area in Castle Garden. (Museum of Hamburg History)*

and not what they had imagined when first viewed from the deck of the *Laura*. Immigration ports were no safe havens for these travelers as parasitic hucksters and thieves lived off them. After enduring the arduous journey by ship, the immigrants faced even worse hazards on the streets of New York City. Johann Friedrich knew that streetwise thieves might part him from his money and possessions, so he was eager to continue the journey and not tarry in New York.



*Castle Garden is the central focus of this view, published in 1872 by Currier and Ives. The narrows (top left) is where sailing ships and steamers entered the harbor, anchored at quarantine by the Staten Island shore (top right), then entered the Upper Bay. In the Bay, from left to right is Governor's Island, Fort Wood on Bedloe's Island (upper right), and (at far right near New Jersey's shore) is Ellis Island. In the foreground, immigrants fill the walkways and the pier while their baggage is hauled away in horse-drawn wagons. (New York Public Library Prints Division, Eno Collection)*

In any event, when the family had completed the required in-processing, they may have boarded a large steamer and sailed up the Hudson River to Albany. There they may have transferred their meager possessions to barges that took them on the Erie Canal to Buffalo, New York. It is more likely they boarded a train in New York for the trip to Buffalo. The Erie Railway, completed in 1842, was the fastest means of transportation from New York to Buffalo. Because many immigrants used the same route, the train compartments were totally overcrowded and noisy. Another complaint about the rail service was the speed at which the train traveled. In Europe, trains traveled slowly, about twenty miles an hour; but in the United States everything moved much faster, which often frightened the immigrant passengers packed in like sardines. On the straight and level, the train hurtled along the track at speeds of forty miles per hour, and sometimes higher. There were few intermediate stations to hinder the engineer, only the tracks with the forests whizzing past the windows. In spite of the top speeds, the trip took over twenty hours.

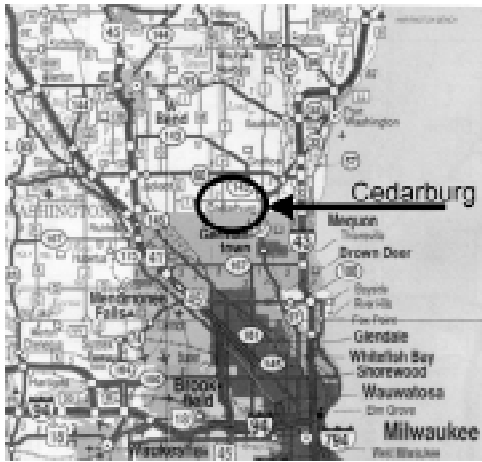
It is certain the entire family reunited in Buffalo. Buffalo was a way station where the travelers stopped to rest before proceeding to Wisconsin, their ultimate destination. There they listened as Peter described his journey and his experiences over the past few months, and they, in turn, related theirs. Peter had made arrangements for them, so the family remained in Buffalo until Wilhelmine and Peter's first child was born 18 June 1857. Louisa Friedricke Sophie Bergin was born only eighteen days after Wilhelmine first stepped on American soil. She was the first native-born United States citizen in this Heuer family. Her birth was recorded in St. Peter's Evangelical Lutheran Church in Buffalo, New York in the customary manner as a combination birth and baptism entry. This record lists her birth date as 22 June 1857 and her baptism as 26 June. It must have been an error because all other records, including her grave marker, list her birth as 18 June 1857. The entire family must have rejoiced and spent time giving thanks for their good fortune, their safe voyage, and the birth of Louisa.

Johann Friedrich and the family departed shortly thereafter, leaving Peter and Wilhelmine in Buffalo to enable mother and daughter to gain their strength before they followed to Wisconsin. The Heuer family boarded yet another ship, this one a lake vessel that would take them to Milwaukee. By comparison, it was a smaller ship with adequate accommodations for

the relatively short voyage of about ten days.

To some people, the Great Lakes are only a large blue mark on maps of North America with names that are hard to remember. To those who see them for the first time, the lakes are a startling expanse of emerald blue water that stretches beyond the horizon. To the Heuer family, the lakes very much resembled the Baltic Sea, except that they were fresh water. To be sure, they had heard the stories of vessels that had disappeared in storms, for the lake waters could be whipped into an ugly grey-green in a matter of minutes and without warning. But when the lakes are calm and the spring storms have passed, as it might have been in June 1857, the voyage would have provided the Heuer family with a panoramic view of their new country. After the long ocean voyage, where all they saw for weeks was an endless expanse of seawater, the lake voyage was a welcome contrast. The scenery along the lake's shores, of vast forests as far as the eye could see, broken here and there by the mouth of a river where the cabins of settlers were sheltered by the virgin trees, was a beautiful sight and one they would never forget. There were many schooners on the lake with their sails full of fresh air, blown toward their destinations with their cargo of wood, iron ore, coal, and people. Sometimes they would pass close enough to wave at the crew and passengers of other boats. The farther west they sailed, fewer and fewer settlements were seen, especially along the northern shores of Wisconsin, as the boat hugged the western shore of Lake Michigan on its passage south to Milwaukee, their destination. Although they did not know it at the time, they more than likely passed very near where the family would eventually settle. This lake voyage must have been an exciting and awesome experience for these early immigrants. Even today, a trip by sailboat from Buffalo to Milwaukee would be the envy of many.

Upon reaching Milwaukee, they searched for a temporary residence and found one in Cedarburg, Ozaukee County, Wisconsin situated just north of Milwaukee. They were joined by Peter, Wilhelmine, and baby Louisa several weeks later. Johann Friedrich, Peter Bergin, August, Ferdinand, and Johann found whatever work they could to recoup some of the cost



of the trip, to support themselves, and to add to their savings for the future purchase of land. There is no way of knowing what they did, but Cedarburg was a farming community, and they may have been engaged in that kind of endeavor. They may also have worked in a factory producing bricks or other construction materials. They probably joined the First Immanuel Lutheran Church and felt very much at home with the large Prussian community that had already settled in the area. Their constant goal, however, was to find the right place to purchase land and begin farming. It took a little time to assimilate all the new information they were hearing and compare it to what they had heard while still in Prussia.

It is appropriate to explain how the state of Wisconsin viewed the surge of immigrants – more than five million alone from Germany, including Prussia, who came to America between 1820 and 1900. The Prussians – the Heuers being only one example – lost their national identity in the record keeping. When Prussia became a state within the Federation of German

states in 1871, known thereafter as Germany, all Prussian nationals became Germans. Although there are some records that identify Prussian nationals as a separate group of immigrants before 1871, they are usually lumped into the immigrant group classified as being from Germany. This conversion, from Prussian to German in 1871, may not have been very important for the children of Johann Friedrich and Catharina Sophia Heuer because they, no doubt, already considered themselves Americans. Their parents, however, and those like them who had lived a large portion of their lives in the country of Prussia, may have held a fierce loyalty to their mother country and did not necessarily approve of the new 1871 Prussia, now nothing more than a German state. Perhaps that explains why so few of them went through the naturalization process to become citizens of the United States. Many of their children did, even though they had been born in Prussia. The next generation who were born in America, automatically became citizens; and based on the research for this history, many of them and their descendants have always thought they were of German descent, not Prussian. For later historians, Prussian and German were synonymous.

Many Prussian and German immigrants came to Wisconsin as a result of extensive pamphlet distributions and advertising campaigns in German and Prussian newspapers. Friedrich II of Prussia had forbidden any efforts by other countries to lure his subjects away, but nonetheless, people were aware of the many opportunities in America.

Prominent political and social leaders, once they were established in the state, became very involved in bringing other men of talent to Wisconsin. A Milwaukee publication, the *Wisconsin Banner*, became the leading voice in the movement for the liberal franchise for foreigners.

The existence of the Wisconsin Bureau of Immigration became widely known throughout Europe, and its square dealing strengthened the good name the state had already gained. Although this office was disenfranchised in 1855, in 1867 the state re-established a board of immigration. A local committee of three citizens in each county was appointed by the governor to assist the board, particularly in making out lists of the names and addresses of European friends of Wisconsin settlers, so that state information packages might be sent directly to them.

These state promoters were influential in directing German immigration to specific areas, hopefully to gain control



through their numbers and make them German states. However, they could not consistently agree on the region to be settled; some desired Texas and Oregon, while the majority favored the Northwest Territory, then known as the area between the Mississippi and the Great Lakes. Franz Löher, one of the first German travelers and a renowned letter writer, advocated the best place for German settlers was the territory between the waters of the Ohio and Missouri, and then to the northwest. Credited with writing the so-called “romantic history” of the Germans in America, he was genuinely interested in the German-American population of the United States. Since he favored a German concentration in the Northwest Territory, he spoke in favor of Wisconsin and Iowa for settlement, and if elsewhere, Texas.

Stronger pull factors were the favorable reports sent back in letters to their homeland by the immigrants who were well pleased with their location in Wisconsin. The adage, “Nothing succeeds like success,” characterized the proactive process that advertised the state and its virtues. Glowing accounts of life in America became very popular. America was often described as a classless society with high wages, low prices, good land, and a non-repressive government. Advertisements by shipping firms and land-speculation companies also beckoned Old World peasants and offered special inducements to entice newcomers. However, relatively few immigrants found the paradise promised by the ads and the letters home.

Another lure was the climate of Wisconsin, which was ideal for farming. Although the winters were cold, the air was dry, and fevers incident to new settlements, were not as prevalent as elsewhere. The climate and soil were considered to be best suited for Germans since it closely resembled what the immigrants had left in their homeland. Even the farm products were the same as those raised in Germany for generations – wheat, rye, oats, barley, and garden vegetables. Moreover, there was no competition with slave labor, felt to be degrading by the self-respecting German, who had been attracted by the reports he had heard of the dignity of labor in America.

Several other causes united in bringing Wisconsin so large a foreign and particularly a German population. In the first place, when admitted to statehood on 29 May 1848, Wisconsin was unencumbered by any public debts resulting from large-scale infra-structural improvements. Therefore, immigrants had no immediate burdens of taxation. By this time, Michigan, Illinois, and Indiana already had large public debts, so immigration was directed to Wisconsin, Missouri, and Iowa. Secondly, the constitution adopted by the state was very liberal towards foreigners. To secure the right of voting, only one year of residence was required.

Another feature favorable to the German immigration was Wisconsin’s liberal land policy. Land granted by the government for the maintenance of schools was sold at low prices and without delay to the immigrants. Nearly four million acres of land were available for the benefit of schools, and the greater part of these lands were offered for sale at the minimum government price of \$1.25 per acre. Some remote sections of land sold for less, others appraised higher, and some excellent pieces of real estate were even sold on credit. Naturally, because the land policy was so progressive, even the poorest immigrant, after some years of honest labor, was empowered to assume property rights and to meet his financial obligations.

Wisconsin’s population more than doubled between 1850 and 1860. In 1850, the population was 305,391 and a decade later it had reached 775,881. Milwaukee in 1850 had 7,271 Germans out of its total 20,061 residents.

Between 1857 and 1859, the Heuer family continued working in the Cedarburg area. In and around Cedarburg there was much discussion among the immigrants interested in farming about a new frontier in Wisconsin. The area was accessible only by boat. It was north of a town called Manitowoc, north of a village called Kewaunee, and was on a river the local Potawatomi Indians, members of an Algonquian people, called Ahnepee (Ahn-ne-pee’) meaning, “where’s the river,” or, “wolf river.”<sup>7</sup> This new virgin land on the banks of Lake Michigan was covered with forests, with trees of many varieties including pine, cedar, hemlock, beech, and maple, and with a sprinkling here and there of oak.

Kewaunee, fourteen miles south of Ahnepee, was first settled in 1842 when John Vault arrived with his family at the mouth of the river known as Kewaunee. The name is derived from two Indian words, “Ke-weenaw,” which means, “go around.” It is believed the name came from the fact that in early times it was necessary, because of the marshes, to have to go up the river about three miles to ford. John Vault erected a log cabin and sawmill at this fording place, then and now called Foot Bridge, and also constructed a dock on the shore of Lake Michigan to facilitate the shipment of his lumber products. More settlers followed, and soon Kewaunee was a thriving community.

The first white person recorded to have discovered the Ahnepee area was Joseph McCormick. In 1834, he set out from Manitowoc with a group of friends in a small boat and navigated the Ahnepee (then Wolf) River north to the present site of Forestville. After several days of exploring that northern region, the group returned to their home in Manitowoc, sharing the discovery of the newly-found land with the community.

His glowing accounts of the beautiful, heavily-timbered land, the rich fertile soil, and the abundance of game caused many of the new settlers of Manitowoc to strongly consider vacating their new homes and moving to this place. The idea waned with the passage of time and was finally abandoned. However, it had been Joseph McCormick’s desire to obtain the forty acres of land lying on the south side of the mouth of the Ahnepee River, knowing that it would someday be valuable property. Later, those whom he thought were his friends, and with whom he had shared the experiences of his exploration, secured the land for themselves. McCormick had the rightful claim on the land, but it had been lost; he did not visit the area again until 1855 when he was the first settler in the town of Forestville, nine miles northwest, up the Ahnepee River.

Records from 1851 show that the first permanent white settlement began in the region that is now known as Algoma. In



*In 1856, Kewaunee was a tiny hamlet and many homes were mere shanties. As seen above, the river mouth, north of it's present site, was often filled with silt, necessitating the rafting of lumber into the lake for loading. In 1850, a pier had been built in the vicinity of Pioneer Park. The pier greatly benefited shippers. The large building near the bottom of the picture was Kewaunee's first hotel, The Black Well House, built in 1854 where people forded the river. After the first bridge was erected in 1860, this hotel went out of business. (Courtesy of Kewaunee County Historical Society)*

March of that year, Orrin Warner and John Hughes (also spelled Hues), both from Manitowoc, arrived in Wolf River as it was known at the time. The two young men, both in their early thirties, had come to Wolf River in their sailboat and remained one week. They explored the area while living in a tent made from the sails of their boat, before returning to Manitowoc.

On 27 June 1851, Edward Tweedale and John Hughes returned to Wolf River with their families to camp under their sails. Seven days later, Orrin Warner and family arrived, and the first white settlers began to prepare a more permanent shelter. They erected a small shanty on the high ground on the south side of the Wolf River. It was occupied only about three weeks when it accidentally caught fire from nets hanging too near the fire (they had no stoves) and was completely destroyed together with its contents.

Nevertheless, they persevered and built another shanty; the three families began the settlement on the land they had purchased. Shortly after that, John Hughes built a house on the bluff north of the river near the lakeshore. It was constructed of logs and covered with bark. Edward Tweedale erected the second house on the south bank of the river near where Fourth Street is today. Orrin Warner followed with his own house nearby. The houses were without doors or windows for some time, and in the meantime they were covered with blankets. Lumber to make the doors and windows had to be brought in by boat, which had a lower priority than foodstuffs.

The first settlers experienced great difficulties in obtaining food. The nearest settlement where food and other necessities were available was Manitowoc, forty or more miles south. If they could not go by boat, often the case in the winter months, they had to travel by foot and to return with the provisions on their back. They also had to make their own trail, at least as far as Kewaunee since there were no roads.

The first white child born in the settlement on Wolf River, and in Kewaunee County, was William Tweedale, son of Edward on 10 September 1851.

The first vessel that sailed to Wolf River was the *Citizen* of Manitowoc. She made several trips to the settlement in 1851 and sailed regularly to this port during the season of 1852, bringing supplies to the settlers and carrying cargo of ties, posts, wood bark, and telegraph poles to the southern markets. During the same season a small trading vessel, the *Mary C. Platt*, also stopped several times to supply the pioneers with flour, sugar, tea, coffee, and other articles of necessity, which could not be obtained otherwise, except by a trip to Manitowoc on foot.

On 16 April 1852, Kewaunee County was established by a Wisconsin State Legislative Act. Up to that point, Brown

## Evolution of Counties



**The Wisconsin Territory** - July 3, 1836  
Included Minnesota, parts of Iowa, and Dakotas



**1818** - Crawford and Brown Counties



**1829** - Crawford, Brown and Iowa Counties



**1836** Crawford, Brown, Iowa and Milwaukee Counties



1840 - 22 counties

Brown, Calumet, Crawford, Dane, Dodge, Fond du Lac, Grant, Green, Iowa, Jefferson, Manitowoc, Marquette, Milwaukee, Portage, Racine, Rock, St. Croix, Sauk, Sheboygan, Walworth, Washington, Winnebago



1850 - 31 counties

New counties since 1840: Adams, Chippewa, Columbia, Kenosha, Lafayette, LaPointe (Bayfield), Marathon, Richland and Waukesha



1860 - 58 counties

New counties since 1850: Ashland, Bad Axe (Vernon), Burnett, Buffalo, Clark, Dallas (Barron), Door, Douglas, Dunn, Eau Claire, Green Lake, Jackson, Juneau, Kewaunee, LaCrosse, Monroe, Oconto, Outagamie, Ozaukee, Pepin, Pierce, Polk, Shawano, Trempealeau, Waupaca, Waushara and Wood



1961 - 72 counties

New counties since 1860: Florence, Forest, Iron, Lincoln, Marinette, Menominee, New (Langlade), Oneida, Price, Rusk, Sawyer, Taylor, Vilas, Washburn

County encompassed all the territory north of Manitowoc, including Door County. A formal county government was not organized until 1856 when the first county offices were filled by elected officials. The new county was then divided into one-square-mile townships.

The area commonly referred to as Wolf River was officially named town of Wolf by the early settlers in 1852. From 1852 to 1855, only a handful of new settlers arrived and some of these were land speculators. Two of these were Peter Schiesser and Joseph Anderegg. John Hughes sold his large property holdings to these two men and moved from the area in 1855.

Some of the early settlers of the township of Wolf were American citizens who migrated from nearby Manitowoc, while others came from the east. One of these was Abraham S. Hall, a New Yorker, who claimed to be the fourth settler. He came to the town of Wolf in May 1852 to erect the first sawmill located on the south branch of the river, about one-half mile from the lake. Prior to moving to Wolf, Hall had been engaged in operating Vault's mill at Foot Bridge in Kewaunee. His claim to be the fourth settler was somewhat tainted by the fact he had already been a resident of the county. Abraham Hall and his brother Simon Hall, who moved to the township and joined him in his business on 20 April 1855, operated the sawmill jointly. They added a gristmill attached to the sawmill, the first of its kind in the county. Unfortunately, both mills were completely destroyed by fire around 1870. The Hall brothers, in 1855, also built and fully stocked a store near their mills. This was the first mercantile establishment in the town.

The following excerpt from an article titled, "Reminiscences of the Early Days of Kewaunee County" from the *Ahnapee Record* edition of 13 February 1879 told us more:

In the early days of this county, when the country was sparsely settled, going to mill was one of the many difficulties which the inhabitants were subjected to. The first grist mill in this part of the county was erected by A. S. Hall, in this city (Ahnapee) to which the people for miles around were obliged to come with their grain. Mr. Simon Hall tells us that he has often seen whole families from remote parts of the county come to his mill with their family of five persons, husband, wife and three children, who lived some eighteen miles distant. They started from home at early dawn, the husband carrying one bushel of wheat, the wife  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a bushel and so on down to the youngest, all carrying what they could conveniently. A little girl, the youngest of the family, for her portion, brought 25 pounds. This little girl, when placed upon the scales, weighed but 40 pounds herself, and yet she had toiled along with the others, through the almost trackless forests for 18 miles with a burden over  $\frac{1}{2}$  of her own weight.

Many times he has known 75 or 80 people to be at his mill at once, all waiting their turn. For their accommodation he had erected a house near the mill, where they could shelter themselves from the storm, prepare their meals or rest during the night.

The first death in the town, and possibly the county, occurred in the winter of 1852-53. A young man – a stranger – on his way from Manitowoc to some point in the north, arrived at the residence of Mathias Simons (who really was the fourth settler) one severely cold afternoon, having been traveling for two days from Kewaunee to Wolf. He had taken no food or anything to drink and was not dressed for the weather he encountered. He spent the night without shelter and his feet, hands, and some portions of his body and face were badly frozen. The settlers tried to assist him and alleviate his suffering, but there was not much they could do for him. He lingered in great pain for nine days before he died. His name was never mentioned in the article of this event.

In 1854, the first vessel of any considerable size to enter the Wolf River, did not hesitate but sailed boldly up the river channel. It was the schooner *Julia Ann* of Racine. She was owned and commanded by Charles L. Fellows, a resident and prominent businessman of the town.

Among the first settlers were Asa Fowles and James A. Defaut. These men and their families moved to the township in 1854. Both families lived on the west side, along what became the road to Green Bay. James Defaut was later very active in the town government and would fill many offices of honor and trust, including Chairman of the Town Board of Supervisors.

The second store built in the town was a small board structure owned by David Youngs. It was built in 1855 and stocked with goods. In 1858, the building was moved across the street and converted to a private dwelling. Youngs then built the post office building on the site of his previous store. The front of the building was used by Mathias Simon, the first Postmaster, when the town post office was officially established on 4 September 1858. The back was used for Youngs store. Youngs also built the north pier on the river in 1856. Later, Youngs would close the store and sell the building and pier to Charles Griswold Boalt, another early resident who owned a dock on both the north and south sides of the river and later served one term as a county judge. His company was an agent for the Goodrich Transportation Company, owners of many lake cargo vessels. His business, domiciled in Chicago, was as a wholesaler of wood, ties, bark, cedar posts, and telegraph poles. He made a sizeable fortune quickly and purchased a great deal of property in the town. Judge Boalt would become known as a member of "the clique," also known as "the damned Yankees," a small and influential group of eastern-born businessmen who dominated the economic life of the town almost since its inception.<sup>8</sup>

As early as 1855, eighty-two brigs, 187 barques, and 146 schooners wintered in the Chicago River. There appeared to

be no lack of water transportation for human or material cargo along the shores of Lake Michigan. Undoubtedly, many smaller boats spent the winters in other ports on the lake.



*The Goodrich Transportation Company dock was one of the early connections to the outside world for the pioneers of Ahnepee. Goodrich steamers brought supplies and new immigrants on a scheduled basis to the growing community. (Courtesy of Kewaunee County Historical Society)*

Abraham D. Eveland and his family, also from New York, moved to the town of Wolf in June 1855. He listed his occupation as innkeeper. He was a land speculator who also established an inn shortly after his arrival. He built a large home on Fourth Street only a short distance from the river. He would later be involved in politics and government, but his greatest legacy would be the A. D. Eveland addition to the town of Ahnepee.

The township of Wolf was growing by leaps and bounds by 1855. The landscape on the north and south banks of the Wolf River had changed forever. Most of the virgin trees had been cut down, and log cabins dotted the land among the three- to four-foot high stumps that protruded everywhere. On the south bank, the first visage of an organized settlement was rising out of the rubble. The land rush had begun. The first Prussian, German, Belgian, Norwegian, Bohemian, and Swiss immigrants began arriving in 1855. They kept coming for many years thereafter. A major portion of the Prussian and German immigrants came from the northeastern provinces of East and West Prussia – Pommern and Posen. Most traveled the same route as the Heuers.

The following is quoted from an *Algoma Record* series, “Wolf River, The Remembrances of a Boy and his Impressions of our Early Pioneer Life,” found in the 26 August 1910 edition, originally written by George W. Wing, pioneer and first editor of the *Ahnepee Record*:

During the years of 1856 and 1857, a strong tide of German settlement turned toward Wolf River and found lodgment in the town of Wolf several miles west of the village and upon the fertile lands north of the city.

Many of the settlers came to the Ahnepee area directly from their native lands, and were entirely unacquainted with the language and customs of the people that had arrived before them. The new arrivals were strong and willing workers who were inured to the frugal practices in the land they had left. With eager determination, they bravely attacked forests of cedar, beech and maple and carved out small clearings on which to construct their first homes, crude shelters which were transformed into log cabins, some of which had roofs made of bark and blankets carefully hung over door and window openings. Small garden patches began to take on shape and form.

They were a God fearing people and brought with them the desire for religious instruction. One of their steps, was to contribute enough from their meager earnings to build two small churches – Lutheran and Catholic – both standing quite neighborly on the hill across the river. Theirs was the first settled form of worship attempted in Ahnepee.

Among these north-side German settlers were August Kassner, Albert Schmiling, Conrad Zoerb, Frederick Heuer, Frederick Damas, Christian Bramer, George Bohman, Casper Zimmermann, Christian Ebert, August Schuennemann, John Berg and the Feuersteins. This settlement was composed of an unusually industrious and intelligent class of men and women. They fraternized readily with villagers, and therefore became better known in the early days than those living further to the west.

The information, though true, was a broad statement about the times but did not include specifics that records would explain. For example, it is correct to say that a large group of German settlers came to Wolf River in the years 1856-1857, however, not all those mentioned arrived between those years. Other settler families, besides those mentioned, were the Melchoirs, Knipfers, Berndts, Densows, Brandts, Raethers, Haacks, Gerickes, Krauses, Buschs, Klenskys, Shaws, and Bergins to name a few among the many. There were several different Raether and Zimmerman families in this first group of pioneers. This history touches the lives of many of those named.

The first blacksmith in the town of Wolf was John Roberts who arrived in 1856. He set up a small shop in a log shanty in the Sachtlebed's block near the old Union House. He worked his trade there for some time and later moved to another log building near the Second Street bridge.

J. M. L. Parker was the first skilled craftsman who came to town along with his family early in 1856. He immediately began working at his carpentry trade, starting the north pier project.

The first steamboat to appear in the port was the old steamer *Cleveland* of Manitowoc. This event on 8 August 1856 was hailed by the new settlers with great jubilation. The boat brought freight and new settlers to town. On board were friends, John A. Daniels and Dr. Levi Parsons, who migrated to the town from New York with their families. Dr. Parsons was the town's first medical practitioner and John Daniels, an attorney, the first representative of the law. Daniels conducted his business in the same comfortable quarters with Dr. Parsons. In his profession, Dr. Parsons considered it no task at all to make house calls starting in the dead of night through the trackless forests to see a patient some miles away. Fortune favored the town and the doctor was among the favored, for he was soon elected register of deeds and conducted business from his office in a log cabin. The Honorable Lyman Walker would be the second in the legal profession. John Daniels did not stay very long for the reason that lawsuits were as scarce as lawyers. When the members of the new settlement did quarrel, they saw fit to resolve matters without the aid of five dollars worth of advice. Lyman Walker became a respected member of the town and was elected several times to offices of county government.

Another of the earliest settlers was John Peters who came with his family early in the spring of 1856. He resided in the town for several years and then moved to Clay Banks where he lived for some time, later moving to Forestville.

Peter Schiesser and Joseph Anderegg built the first frame house erected in the town of Wolf. The house was located on the south bank of the river on Navarino Street, near John Meverden and Michael Luckenbach's tannery and it was later used as a parsonage.

The building that would become known as the old Union House, fronting on First Street, was the second or third frame building built in the town. It was built in 1856 and was used for a number of years as a hotel under the name Union House. Then its builder and owner, Mrs. Lovel, discontinued the hotel business and used the building as a private residence. It had been the first structure in town opened as a public hotel displaying a sign. By 1873, many years later, Mrs. Lovel still lived there and was planning to put up a new sign and reopen the business.

Other settlers who came in 1856 with their families were William Balbeck and Mr. Meyers. They labored with their neighbors and built houses for themselves and their families. Mr. Meyers stayed only a few years when he and his family moved to somewhere in the west. William Balbeck's occupation was a house painter. He would remain in the town his entire life.

The education of children had been an important part of the culture of both Europe and the United States. The first settlers of Ahnepee were quick to establish this essential prerequisite for the future success of their children. Under the School Law of 1848, free education was supposed to be available to all children between the ages of four and sixteen years. The law did not specify a language until 1854 when a new law specified that the course materials be taught in English. Since many early settlers came from other areas of the United States and spoke English, their immediate goal was to find a teacher and a place to hold classes.

Although the various accounts on the subject of schools are somewhat confusing, M. T. Parker, in his serialized, "Historical Sketch of the Town of Ahnepee," published in the *Ahnepee Record* between July and November 1873, tells us that the first building used as a classroom was a log shanty on the north side of the river. The year was 1855. This was not a public school in the strictest sense because it was formed by the families who lived in the nearby surrounding area on the north side. The first teacher hired by the families was Miss Parker who later became Mrs. George Fowles. Parker goes on to say that the first building erected in Ahnepee as a public school was a small frame building on the north side, built in 1856. This school was located on the bluff overlooking the lake, just north of the house occupied by the lighthouse tenders, on what is now County Highway S. The teacher was Mrs. Sanborn, a widow who lived in Door County. This school was replaced a few years later with another, larger frame building across the road from the earlier structure. The first school would later become the

residence of Edward Harkins, who would sell a plot of land to Johann Friedrich – “Fred” Heuer, son of Johann Friedrich.

In 1858, the residents on the south side of the river rented a small, one-story building at the foot of Steele Street for a schoolroom and hired Miss Irene Yates as their first teacher, succeeded shortly afterwards by Mr. Ward. A year later, the school district decided a more permanent school was needed, and in 1859, built a frame schoolhouse on the northeast corner of Fremont and Fourth streets. Miss Parella Wagner was the first teacher. When this school was built, in what was then a clearing with stumps and logs and a high board fence around it, many settlers complained that the building was too far back in the country. They were concerned for the safety of their children during the long trek to school through the wilderness. The children from Bruemmerville, the Hall Mill settlement, even had to carry their dinners (lunch) to school. The complaining did not accomplish much and by 1866, when another school was opened because of a rapidly growing population, new settlers had filled in many of the empty spaces on the surrounding land. A familiar pattern had thus been established. The paint on the new school had hardly dried when enrollment increased to warrant greater space – or a new facility.

The first regular election was held in the township of Wolf on 1 April 1856 in Abraham Hall and Company’s sawmill. The election was conducted in the same room used earlier for the meeting to organize the town. The town at this time contained scarcely more than a sufficient number of legal voters to fill all the town offices. Consequently, there was little trouble obtaining a place on the ticket, and politics and political speeches were not in demand. The caucus consisted only of selecting the men most familiar with town business. Following is the result of this first election:

Supervisors: James A. Defaut, Chairman, John M. Hughes and D. W. Tery, Supervisors.

Clerk: Joseph Anderegg.

Treasurer: Simon Hall.

Assessors: Abraham D. Eveland, G. Hind and Peter Schiesser.

Justices of the Peace: S. Chapel, Julius Gregorin, Orrin Warner and David Price.

Constable: H. N. Smith, Asa Fowles and Abraham D. Eveland.

The task of organizing a town in the wilderness was no small feat, and these men deserve a great deal of praise and respect for the successful manner in which they carried out their various duties.

The new settlement was making progress, but one element of an organized community had not yet been addressed. The township had no fire department. The first major fire occurred on the morning of 12 February 1857. A frame house, owned and occupied as a dwelling by Frank Feuerstein and Anton Launicker, caught fire and burned to the ground with all its contents, despite every effort by the settlers to put out the flames. It was a considerable loss for the owners as building materials were not so easily obtained, and worse, household furnishings were only available from far away Manitowoc. Even today, with full-time fire departments, the dangers of fire have yet to be solved.

Another citizen destined for prominence in the future was G. W. Elliott. He visited briefly in February 1857 alone, liked what he saw, and returned with his family to stay in June of the same year. He would take an active part in the further organization of the town and hold many elected offices.

The first bridge across the Wolf River was built in the summer of 1857. It was located near the mouth of the river, about where Church Street would cross the river if extended across from north to the south. It had piers on each end and was constructed of timber. It provided good service for a number of years but was finally torn down when a new bridge of the same type construction was built on the Second Street site. Some planking and timber from the old bridge were used in the new one. The main reason for doing away with the old bridge was that it was becoming unsafe; and it was not located in the central part of town.

And what, one might ask, had happened to all the native American Indians who had lived and traveled throughout the Wolf River area? The following article from the 5 September 1968 edition of the *Algoma Record-Herald*, quoting from the writings of the late George W. Wing an early pioneer, explains:

#### **Visits by Roaming Indians Enlivened Life in Early Algoma**

Real blanketed Indians, wearing loinclths, buckskin doublets and strings of gaudy beads, were at one time regular visitors at Algoma. They camped the beaches of the pioneer settlement, then known as Wolf River, and buried their dead on the flats at the south end of town. Their annual dog feasts were occasions not quickly forgotten by the pioneers, including the late George W. Wing. A Wing account of the Indian visits follows:

There were some early frequenters here, who, while not exactly habitants were so often upon our streets and in our front and back yards that we came to know them pretty well.

The early Wolf River housewife engaged in her round of duties would of a day be startled by a creaking floor board and turn to find Chenaub or Paw-co-wauppee, or Quetetke, the short-footed joker, within the doorway, hands extended for a “big eat.”

Many a Wolf River child, playing upon the floor, looked up to see a black, painted face peering in at the window. It was always Indian etiquette and good breeding to look into the window first before trying the door.



These nomads of the forest, Chippewas, Menominees, Pottawattamies, still claimed the forest round about for their game preserves, and paddled their birch canoes, or sailed their rotten mackinaws with mottled sails up and down the shores of the lake in apparently aimless and restless activities.

They were the real blanket Indians, wearing breech clouts, buckskin doublets, strings of gaudy beads, and lived by chance and the chase – heathen, harmless, and much given to firewater.

One of their early burial places was on the flats just below the Tweedale hill, and I recall that on several occasions they brought the bodies of their dead here in canoes for burial.

They seemed continually coming and going, but coming whence and going whither no man seemed to know. Indeed, they were something like the famous pants Johnny Karel's grandmother made for him; when Johnny had them on, one couldn't tell whether he was coming or going.

Their camping place was usually upon the beach just south of the old bridge pier, about where the water and electric lighting plant now stands or upon the grassy flats just north of the river. It was a light order of housekeeping.

#### **Squaws Did Work**

When their canoes or boats grounded upon the beach, the work of the lazy bucks appeared to be over. They would jump ashore, throw themselves in luxurious ease upon the warm sands, while the patient squaws hauled the boat out, made it secure, tumbled out the wigwam poles and canvass, the camp kettle and other equipment, pitched the wigwam, gathered wood and built the fires, and then went up into the village to collect food from the settlers for their meal.

Indeed, Quetek, Skeesicks, Paw-co-waupee, Hochunka, and old Moffou the Drunkard were all wise men and had learned the science of utilities and were domestic economists – women must work.

I recall that upon one occasion for several days various parties from different points assembled here by land and water until quite a village of wigwams covered the flats upon the north side of the river and possible 200 bucks, squaws and papooses had come together. It was the annual dog feast.

An Indian eats dog in order that he may be brave, and so it was considered a great compliment to say to one, "You dog of an Indian." "You Indian dog." However, I wouldn't advise anyone to attempt any compliments of that kind to the modern red man, for he might not understand the delicate nature of the flattery intended.

#### **Whoops and Yells**

After all had assembled one night, they built a great camp fire, cooked their dogs and consumed quantities of fire water, after which they made the night hideous with their whoops and yells, and shouts and singing, and the various heathen ways of expressing that they were having a good time.

Eating dog evidently made them brave for part of the performance consisted in dragging the squaws around by the hair of the head, at the same time barking like dogs.

The whites assembled on this side of the river to witness the pagan performance going on by the campfire, with not a few fears that the drunk – mad dog feasters might take notion to cross over the river and continue their social festivities in our very midst.

The most thoroughly disgusting party on the southside of the river was Youngs' "Old Tige," who bayed and howled in rage and disquiet at what he probably felt was a gross insult and outrage upon all canines.

It was soon after the dog feast across the river; Youngs' Old Tige and the boys of the village had never quite forgiven the dog feasters for their scandalous epicurean tastes, and whenever afterwards one of them would appear in the town, Old Tige would pounce upon him fiercely, while the young white reformers of the village would throw stones and other missiles at the heathen. It was our way of expressing disapproval of their kind of an appetite, and perhaps we also hoped to reform them. Bigger men having been doing the same thing in working out other reforms.

#### **Caught Behind Woodpile**

Just south across the street from where Swaty's store now stands was a long pile of cordwood, and along the street side of this pile a band of Indians was passing, industriously worried by Old Tige, while from behind the pile came showers of sticks and stones thrown by the youthful Wolf River anti-dog-eaters.

The writer was cautiously peering around one corner of the woodpile, red handed, when suddenly he felt a firm grip upon his collar, and looked up in horror and dismay to find himself the captive of Skeesicks, who had crept around the woodpile and came up behind stealthily. I remember that he shook a great deal of my ambition to be a dog-eating reformer out of me, and I have ever since maintained and still do that if any one wants to eat dog, why let him, for all that I care.

The name of the township of Wolf was changed by a resolution of the Kewaunee County Board to the town of Ahnepee, adopted on 10 May 1859. At the same time, the name of the Wolf River was changed to Ahnepee, and all references to the old names passed into history.

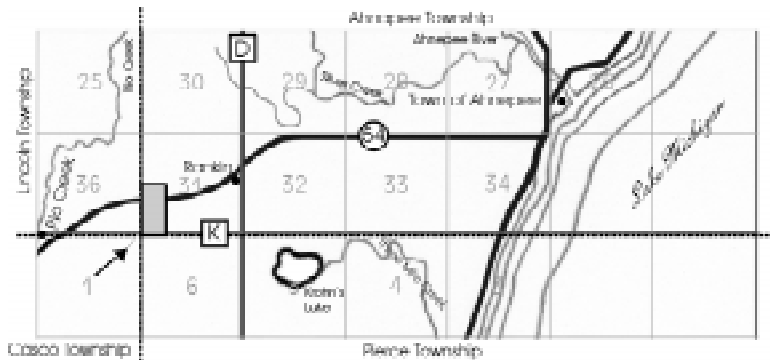
The transition of the Heuer family, from Cedarburg, Wisconsin to the township of Ahnepee, is difficult to relate because there are no known records that would tell us exactly how it happened. The article quoted earlier states that many settlers came directly from their native lands. Many did, but we know the Heuers spent at least two years in Cedarburg. We believe they stayed there to work and build up their cash reserves. Peter Bergin did the same, utilizing his woodworking skills and saving money to purchase land.

Then, through the information gathered from the immigrant families who were already settled in the town of Ahnepee,

and from land promoters like John Hughes, Orrin Warner, Peter Schiesser, and Joseph Anderegg, the decision to migrate north to this new frontier was an easy one for Johann Friedrich and Catharina Sophia. Peter and Wilhelmine Bergin, for reasons of their own, chose to remain in Cedarburg.

The actual migration could have been accomplished in one of two ways. The men, Johann Friedrich, August, Ferdinand, and Johann might have sailed north alone in the summer or early fall of 1859 to the town of Ahnepee. They would have found work before they left the dock as there was a great demand for labor. They would have secured housing and worked while looking over the area to determine what land was available and where they wanted to settle. Catharina Sophia, Ernestine, Bertha, and Augusta would have remained in Cedarburg, living with Peter and Wilhelmine, with Peter being the sole support of the family. One or two of the men would have returned in the spring of 1860 to gather the Heuer family and bring them to the town of Ahnepee.

The second scenario that follows may be the most likely considering how close these immigrant families were. In the fall of 1859, the Heuer family boarded a boat in Port Washington, Wisconsin or some other nearby port and sailed north to the town of Ahnepee. At first they would have stayed in one of the boarding houses while Johann Friedrich, August, Ferdinand, and Johann traveled around the area getting the lay of the land, getting acquainted, and visiting the real estate offices of Schiesser and Anderegg. Some of the earliest settlers had already built cabins on their land and begun to clear it, selling off the timber and other wood products. In some cases, for a myriad of reasons, these settlers decided to sell their land and later arrivals, like the Heuers, purchased these partially prepared homesteads. There were plenty of land deals being made, keeping Dr. Levi Parsons, the register of deeds for the township, very busy.



*Johann Friedrich Heuer's first land purchase – 1 November 1859. (Map by Ronald James Heuer-2001)*

On 1 November 1859, Johann Friedrich (Frederick Hauer on the deed) purchased eighty acres of land from William and Caroline Haack for \$400.00. On the same date, Johann Friedrich gave to William Haack a mortgage on the eighty acres in the amount of \$100.00. The land is described as the west half of the southwest quarter of section thirty-one, Ahnepee Township, and is located near Rankin, Wisconsin in the southwest corner of the township. Today, State Highway 54 cuts through the northern third of this land, from east to west, about two and one-half miles west of the Algoma city limits.

The value of land had escalated tremendously since 1851. Only eight years

earlier the first land was purchased by John Hughes, Orrin Warner, and Edward Tweedale for about one dollar per acre. John Hughes had sold his considerable land holdings to Peter Schiesser and Joseph Anderegg, no doubt at a good profit. Now in 1859, William Haack was able to command \$5.00 per acre for land that was in the forest and four miles from the village of Ahnepee. It was easy to see how the earliest land buyers in the virgin territories of Wisconsin, who purchased the land from the government, became very rich, very quickly without lifting a finger except to take pen in hand. In the case of those that purchased the land in the town of Wolf – Hughes, Warner, and Tweedale, – it was definitely not that simple as they actually settled the land, putting themselves and their families at great risk. The risks paid off handsomely. It is certain that Schiesser, Anderegg, and others who were early purchasers made out well because they were able to sell the land in smaller lots.

The Heuer homestead had now been established with the land purchase. It is possible and most probable that William and Caroline Haack had built a one-room log cabin on the eighty acres and they may have cleared some of the land. If not, the Heuer family would have that as their first priority. The Martin Raether family lived nearby to the east-northeast, the Friedrich Damas family lived



*A typical log cabin with attached barn and storage shed of the 1860s. This cabin belonged to the parents of the wife of Dr. Kerscher, a well-known Algoma area family doctor of the mid-1900s. The building once stood on the block bounded by Jefferson and Division streets in the city of Algoma. (Courtesy of Kewaunee County Historical Society)*

one and one-quarter miles to the east, and the Christoph Berndt family lived three quarters of a mile to the east. Wolfgang and Anna Seidl lived on forty acres adjacent to the Heuer land, slightly north and west. The northwest corner of the Heuer eighty met the Seidl forty at its southeast corner. They were not out in the wilderness alone, but it must have seemed that way. The Green Bay road, undoubtedly nothing much more than a logging trail at the time, cut through their property. There was already a great deal of traffic on this road between Ahnepee and Casco, with merchandise going west and forest products and produce going east.

The Heuer family moved to their new land and occupied the log cabin home, if one existed. They might have expanded the size of the cabin since there were two adult parents, three nearly adult sons, and three daughters ranging in age from fourteen to four. In the event a cabin had to be built, the four Heuer men, with the help of some neighbors, would have accomplished it quickly. By then, building log cabins was much easier because experienced people were available for advice. The materials were always close by. This is not to say that building a log cabin was effortless because it was not. Many hours were spent shaping the logs and notching the ends properly. There was a tremendous amount of physical labor involved in placing the logs and sealing the cracks with mortar. Instead of bark for the roofs, shingles produced at the local



*Pictured above is one of the original 1860 log structures on the Johann Friedrich Heuer homestead in Rankin, now owned by the Matzke family. The roof had been replaced, probably more than a few times over the last 140 years, which protected the structure from the elements. Photo taken in 2000. (Courtesy of Suzanne Emelyn Heuer Vlach)*

mills by the thousands were now used. The windows were made of lumber and opened on leather hinges or maybe even hinges made of metal. Divided doors were built, a practice brought from the old country. The upper half could be opened to let in light and air while the lower half closed to keep out unpenned animals. This type of door was common, especially in communities settled by immigrants from Holland and Germany.

The next task was the building of fences and shelters for the animals, maybe oxen but more likely horses that were the most valued possessions a settler could have. They also had a few cows and raised a few geese and ducks. Every farmer had a small flock of chickens, laying hens to be more specific, which provided a steady supply of eggs for breakfast and for cooking and baking.

It should be noted that Wisconsin had only become a state in 1848; before that it had been a part of the Northwest Territory. Dairy farms were nonexistent in those early years. At first, the only saleable product from the land was the timber; it was in great demand for the building of the cities to the south – Milwaukee and Chicago. Fence posts, timber, bark, and smaller trees suitable for telegraph poles were all cash crops that could only be harvested once. Nothing went to waste. Even the sawdust was used on town streets and country roadbeds to make them more passable. A major problem was getting these cumbersome products from the budding farm to the sawmill, usually located in the river villages like Ahnepee, where water was used as the power source to run the saws. The sawed lumber could then be loaded on barges or scows for the trip south. The sawmill operators employed buyers and crews of men who went out into the forests, purchased the logs and

posts, and transported them to the sawmill. Of course, the farmer was not paid a great deal for the wood, no matter what form it was in, but it was enough to purchase the horses, cattle, poultry, hogs, and seed necessary to subsist and enhance their meager, austere living conditions.

Once the outbuildings were completed, the men began to clear the land, acre by acre. When one considers the amount of labor involved in clearing virgin forest with only hand tools, it is not hard to conclude that the income from it was dismal. Swinging a double-bitted axe from sunup to sundown, interrupted by long stints on the end of a two-man cross cut saw, was probably something to look forward to when considering the backbreaking drudgery of removing the stumps. The large trees were felled, trimmed, and sawed into logs of manageable lengths. They were left where they lay until one of the crews from the sawmill would arrive with teams of horses and heavy-duty wagons, or sleighs in the winter, to snake out the logs, load, and haul them away. Some farmers had enough equipment to do this themselves, but it was very hard work for horses and dangerous work for men, work best left to experienced crews with all the proper equipment.

Large branches and smaller trees were cut into short pieces to be hauled to the cabin and piled outside for use as firewood for the fireplace or stove that was used both for heating and cooking. The remaining brush was piled at a convenient place and burned. The only thing remaining was the many tree stumps.

If cutting, sawing, and selling off the trees was considered hard work, it was nothing compared to removing the stumps. To remove the stumps, small or large, the first step was to dig away the soil from the base of the stump. Then the major roots were chopped through, one by one, until the stump was loosened. A rope or chain was then placed around the stump and attached to the whiffletree of the harness. The team of horses would then attempt to pull the stump out while one of the men knelt in the hole and chopped the remaining roots to free it. The removal of large stumps might take as long as two or three days, using the same tedious process. The stumps, once removed, were piled with the brush and burned. If a deep gully, swamp, or other unusable land was available, the stumps were simply discarded there. Dynamite would certainly have been a more efficient, albeit more expensive and more dangerous way of removing stumps and large rocks, but no mention is made of it in any of this early period history. It is easy to see that clearing forty acres took more than one season to accomplish.

Tilling the new soil was not easy the first few years because there were still many roots that refused to give up. And then there were always the rocks and stones right below the surface that were constant sources of aggravation for the person doing the plowing. It was no less fun for those who had to pick them up and load them on wagons or "stone boats." Stone boats were constructed by lashing small logs together into a square that resembled a raft, onto which the largest, unmanageable stones were manhandled. A team of horses or oxen, sometimes one of each, literally dragged the stone boat to a creek bed, gully, or other untillable area where the stones were piled. Sometimes there were so many stones that fences were created with them, especially for those fences that were property lines. The site of the stone pile had to be selected with some foresight, because no one wanted to entertain the thought of having to move them again.

In the spring of 1860, the Heuers planted their first grain crop on whatever land had so far been cleared and tilled, maybe only a few acres. They would have planted wheat as that was the choice of most farmers in the mid- to late-1800s. They also planted a large vegetable garden near the cabin, protected with a fence of some kind to keep out the ever-present rabbits and deer.

During the winter months, when the ground was frozen, there would have been little to do except care for the animals. It is possible the Heuer brothers: August, Ferdinand, and Johann joined the hundreds of men employed as woodcutters in the interior and northern forests. They certainly would not have had to go very far from home because the forests to be harvested were close at hand. It was an opportunity for them to earn money of their own for the eventual goal of buying farmland. By 1859, forest products were one of the two principal industries in Kewaunee County. The other was farming.

The Eighth Federal Census, taken in 1860, records the town of Ahnepee as having 1,152 inhabitants. The growth in the population had been a veritable explosion. From three families in 1851, to perhaps 200 people in 1855 when the immigrants began arriving, was tremendous growth. What happened between 1855 and 1860 was phenomenal. Nine hundred or more had arrived in five years alone, an average of 180 per year. Of course, there were many children included in the total, but the number over that short period was impressive. To put this into some perspective, the city of Algoma, 125 years later, had a population of 3,352, only three times more.

The 1860 United States Federal Census for Kewaunee County was the first in which the Heuers were counted. Johann Friedrich was now using the name Fred. On the 1860 census, the head of the house was listed as: Fred Heir, fifty-one born in 1809. His place of birth was given as Germany, and his occupation was listed as farmer. The value of his real estate

holdings was listed at \$200.00 with a personal estate estimated at \$300.00. The entry was as follows:

Head	Fred	51 years	Born 1809
Wife	Sophia	52 years	Born 1808
Son	August	22 years	Born 1838
Son	Fred	19 years	Born 1841
Son	Ferdinand	16 years	Born 1844
Dau	Augusta	5 years	Born 1855
Dau	Bertha	1 year	Born 1859

The census report was grossly incorrect, which was not unusual given that the Heuers and other immigrants like them were not fluent in English.<sup>9</sup> Johann Friedrich's birth was in 1808, not 1809. Catharina Sophia's name was recorded simply as Sophia. August was born in 1836, not 1838, and he would have been twenty-four. The birth order for Ferdinand and Fred – Johann Friedrich Jr. – should have been reversed. Neither dates of birth were accurate. Ferdinand, born in 1839, was older than Johann who was born in 1842. Bertha, born in 1849, was older than Augusta and would have been eleven in 1860. The information on Augusta seems correct. She was born in 1855, and in 1860 she would have been five.

The census confirmed that the Heuer family was still together on their homestead farm in June 1860, but there was one person missing. Ernestine, now fifteen, was not listed. Further research of the whole census report revealed she was recorded with the Abraham D. Eveland family, working as a domestic. Her name was listed as Tina Hoir, yet another spelling of the name from hearing it pronounced. The Evelands had established an inn near the river in 1855. Ernestine more than likely worked at the inn and at the Eveland residence where she boarded, cooked, and cleaned.

After many of their material requirements such as shelter and food were realized, the Heuers and other Lutherans of the small Ahnepee settlement wanted their spiritual needs satisfied as well. They wanted to belong to a congregation served by a Lutheran minister. Pastor Gottlieb Factmann of the Wisconsin Synod frequently visited Ahnepee while he was on a circuitous mission that included areas around Green Bay. Pastor Factmann, Pastor A. Thiele, and other missionary pastors visited the early settlers in their homes, or wherever they could congregate, to preach sermons, administer communion, and baptize the newborn babies. The missionaries also brought news of the outside world and provided advice when asked. The pioneer families appreciated the work of the missionary pastors but kept the hope alive that they would soon be able to establish their own church.

Mail was brought from Manitowoc to Two Rivers, then delivered to Kewaunee, Ahnepee, and Otumwa, the early name of Sturgeon Bay, on the back of L. M. Churchill, the mail carrier, who made the trip on foot. It was said that on one occasion he made the entire distance of sixty miles from 4:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. with the bag on his back. Soon after that, Doc Vaughan, a Kewaunee liveryman, instituted a weekly stage delivery service between Green Bay and Kewaunee. That service was later expanded to also carry freight to Casco, Coryville, and Walhain in the winter of 1859-60. The volume increased so rapidly that Vaughn was soon forced to make three trips weekly.

Transportation of produce, mainly forest products and grain, was still largely dependent on the vessels that sailed on Lake Michigan. There were several steam vessels traveling from Chicago as far north as Ahnepee. Captain Henry Harkins sailed the *Union* and *Amelia*, both vessels owned by Harkins and David Youngs. Captain Zebina Shaw sailed the schooner *Falcon*, and Captain Charles L. Fellows sailed the *Whirlwind*. Many of these owners would become well known in the town of Ahnepee. These vessels were subject to many disasters. One of the most distressing was the fate of the schooner *Union* bound for Ahnepee. It was loaded with \$3,000 worth of much-needed winter articles. The *Union* filled with water at Manitowoc and spoiled the goods. The loss of a cargo of winter supplies meant something to everybody in the county in those days.

Roads, as a means of transportation, were being developed but the progress was very slow. In 1858 and 1859, many clearings and log houses began to appear along the crude roads that led from Manitowoc and Two Rivers to Kewaunee. From Kewaunee north to Ahnepee, only a couple of dwellings broke the endless forest. Between 1860 and 1870, more settlers purchased this land, and the trails between the clearings became the roads of the future. In the low or swampy areas, roads were constructed using logs. They were called corduroy roads, and anyone who has ever ridden on one of these will testify that the name is appropriate.

The first manufacturing facility in the town of Ahnepee was built in May 1860 by William N. Perry. There were, of course, the sawmills and gristmills that changed logs to lumber and grain to flour, but the Ahnepee Chair Factory was the first to assemble furniture. The factory was located near the Hall brother's mills on the south branch of the Ahnepee River. While it was being built many Ahnepee businessmen told Perry that it would be a sure failure. William Perry, not being easily discouraged went on with the work, completed the building, put in machinery, and through judicious management, made it one of the permanent and profitable institutions of Ahnepee. The factory was enlarged and more modern machinery and fixtures added. By 1873, it had been sold several times and resold, and had in fact, passed through the hands of two-thirds of the businessmen of Ahnepee. In 1873, it was owned and successfully being operated by Joseph Anderegg, John

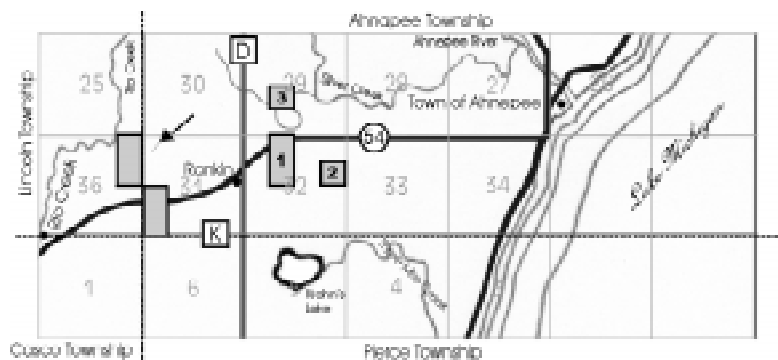


People of Ahnepee referred to Kewaunee as “Sawdustville.” Street maintenance consisted of covering it each spring with sawdust – two or three feet of it. Buildings in the foreground are: (1) the “Steamboat House” built by Charles Brandes in 1858 and (2), a saloon, named “The Wisconsin House.” The Leyse Aluminum Company offices currently occupy the space in the foreground on the right side of the photo. (Courtesy of Kewaunee County Historical Society)

Densow, F. Bublitz, Simon Haag, and Jacob Immel. Anyone with Algoma roots will remember this engine of the local economy as the father of the Algoma Plywood, or simply, The Plywood. Established in 1892, it has gone through ownership changes and is now Algoma Hardwoods, Inc., on the street named after the risk-taking businessman – Perry.

Peter and Wilhelmine Bergin, still in Cedarburg, would soon join the Heuer family. Peter had been working and saving money for his land purchase. On 21 November 1859, a second daughter was born, and they had named her Wilhelmine Alwine Friedricke. She was baptized on 27 November at the First Immanuel Lutheran Church in Cedarburg. Unfortunately, the baptismal record did not include her sponsor’s names, which may have provided a clue as to a possible relationship to the Heuer family.

The Bergin family was counted on the Cedarburg, Ozaukee County, Federal Census Report of 1860. It is certain they were communicating with the Heuers by letter, and that is how they found out the Seidls, neighbors of the Heuers, wanted to sell their land. The Bergins packed their belongings and boarded a boat in Port Washington, bound for Ahnepee, sometime in the fall of 1860. On 27 December 1860, Peter Bergin purchased from Wolfgang and Anna Seidl, forty acres of land described as the southeast quarter of section thirty-six in Lincoln Township. The forty was slightly north and west of the Heuer homestead, with the northwest corner of the Heuer eighty meeting the Bergin forty at its southeast corner. Peter and Wilhelmine paid \$65.00 for the forty and received a warranty deed.



There is little doubt the Heuers assisted Peter and Wilhelmine in the move and land transaction. The families were always mutually supportive. The Seidls more than likely had a cabin on their land but may not have vacated it until the property was sold. The Bergins may have stayed with the Heuers for a short time anyway, to catch up on the news, get the lay of the land, and allow the Bergin daughters to become acquainted with their grandparents and aunts and uncles. The Heuer men assisted Peter Bergin to get established by clearing the land and constructing whatever buildings were necessary. The two families, now living only a short distance from each other, shared equipment, supplies, and produce. By the spring of 1861, the Bergins had settled into their new routine of life, one-half mile west of Rankin.

The election of Abraham Lincoln as President and his inauguration in January 1861 was undoubtedly the subject of many discussions in Ahnepee around the stoves at the country stores. The people talked of the possibility of war and were kept informed by the weekly mail that came to the Ahnepee Post Office. Everyone knew they would be involved in some way, and most of the younger men were aware they might be called up to serve as soldiers. They were no strangers to that fact. It had been the same in Prussia.

The Civil War began on 12 April 1861 when Confederate artillery fired on Fort Sumter, but the news did not reach Kewaunee County until 14 April, a Sunday, at ten o'clock. Assemblyman W. E. Finley was a passenger on the Goodrich steamer *Comet*, returning to his home from Madison. He brought the news that, "the war was on," along with copies of the *Milwaukee Sentinel*. It was not until 14 April that the ice embargo was broken, meaning that now the schooners *Albatross*, *Mary*, and others including the *Comet*, could finally travel Lake Michigan and reach Ahnepee. An enterprising young man, who was the first businessman to establish a paper route, arrived on the *Comet*, and from that time on, the people of Ahnepee and Kewaunee were kept informed with the Chicago dailies: *The Times*, *Tribune*, and *Herald* every Saturday throughout the duration of the war.

In May 1861, three weeks after the opening of the first hostilities between the North and the South, staples were quoted in Kewaunee County as follows: wheat 92 cents; oats 23 cents; corn 35 cents; butter 7 to 9 cents; potatoes 23 cents; lard 11 cents; ham 10 cents; shoulders 7 cents. The price of wheat made it the obvious cash crop for the settler-farmers. The demand for wheat was high, driving the price up, and it spurred the settlers to clear their land quickly so they could raise more of it. The income from the wheat crop was what began to sustain them as the forest product income diminished.

The first man to enlist – Chauncey Thayer – was from the town of Kewaunee. After that, many others thought it would be a great adventure and followed his lead. It was not until the Union defeat at Bull Run that the first real effort to secure recruits was put in motion for 500,000 men in September 1861. Carl H. Schmidt of Manitowoc opened an office in Kewaunee to secure recruits for his company in the newly organized German regiment, the 9th Wisconsin Volunteer Infantry. Many men were volunteering, and recruiting meetings were being held all over the area.

On 11 September 1861, a third daughter was born to Wilhelmine and Peter Bergin. They named her Friedricke Caroline. We do not know when she was baptized, but the ceremony was accomplished by a Lutheran minister from Green Bay who came through the area on an unscheduled basis and handled such matters for the Ahnepee Lutherans. Johann Friedrich and Catharina Sophia now had three granddaughters, all belonging to Wilhelmine and Peter Bergin and all born on American soil.

The steamer *Comet* brought several recruiting officers on 15 September 1861. Their mission was to encourage enlistment in the Manitowoc and Kewaunee Rifles Company. Altogether, thirty-six men from Ahnepee joined the unit, afterward known as Company K, 14<sup>th</sup> Wisconsin Volunteer Infantry Regiment. None of this had much affect on the lives of the Heuer family, but that would soon change.

By 7 December 1861, Johann Friedrich had accumulated enough money to pay off the \$100.00 mortgage still owed to William and Caroline Haack. It must have been a day that fostered joy and thanksgiving because they now owned the eighty acres, free and clear. That had been one of the promises of the opportunities of coming to America, and now it was fulfilled.

The year 1862 brought many changes for the Heuer family. The war had already taken many local men who volunteered; there was already talk of a draft if the war continued. There were not enough volunteers to fill the ranks of the Union Army. The Heuer brothers: August, Ferdinand, and Johann were well aware of this and the probable impact it would have on their lives. August, the oldest at twenty-five was, by tradition, destined to stay at home on the farm. Ferdinand, twenty-two and Johann, nineteen, had accomplished all they could on the farm even though there was much clearing left to do. Besides, they were old enough to begin thinking about their own future, and that would require them to work and earn money for that purpose. We believe they both decided to become sailors on the Great Lakes. Although there are no records to substantiate this with absolute certainty, there is enough information to indicate this probability. There were plenty of boats sailing into the Ahnepee River, and the captains were always looking for good deckhands. The brothers had seen the work of sailors on the voyage across the ocean and on the Great Lakes, which to them must have seemed a lot easier than clearing forests. Maybe the pay was even better; room and board was furnished.

Even though all of the Heuer family members were now eligible to apply for citizenship, none of them did so at this point. For the three brothers, applying for citizenship would have immediately made their whereabouts known, and that was not what they wanted if a draft was imminent. Ferdinand and Johann apparently decided it would be better to be a poor sailor than a dead soldier.

When the war broke out, Wisconsin had existed as a state for only twelve years. Of a population of 775,881, more than half (407,449) were male. In the first year of the war, the state raised eleven regiments of volunteer infantry. Wisconsin regiments were part of the forces commanded by Lieutenant General Ulysses S. Grant and Major General William T. Sherman. Their performance prompted Sherman to say that he, "estimated a Wisconsin regiment equal to an ordinary brigade," a brigade being at least three times larger or more than a regiment. By 1862, Wisconsin was sending not only men to the Civil War battlefields but seventeen million pounds of much-needed lead, wool for blankets and clothing, and foodstuffs from two million acres of cultivated farmland.

The war, however, was not causing any interference with early agricultural pursuits. The 2nd annual County Fair was held in Kewaunee. Religious affairs were not at a standstill either. The German Methodists, in 1861, organized a church in Ahnepee with Reverend C. G. Becker as their first pastor. Not to be outdone, the Lutherans in the same area were preparing to organize, which they did in 1862 with Pastor John H. Brockmann as their first pastor.

Around this time, Franz Swaty, a merchant from Two Rivers, established a mercantile business in the town of Ahnepee. He brought competition to those already there, but the population had grown enough to support him. Progress in the way of transportation and communication was much slower. The first railroad in the state was a line, built in 1851, which ran between Milwaukee and Waukesha, a very short distance. By 1862, the railroad had reached Appleton, the closest station to Ahnepee. There were still no steamboats that worked the lake during the winter, and the closest telegraph office was in Green Bay.

The Union government could no longer fund the rising costs of the Civil War under the system of taxation in effect since the creation of the Treasury Department on 2 September 1789. Over the intervening years, until shortly after the War of 1812, taxes had been levied on liquor, tobacco, and selected manufactured items like carriages, harnesses, boots and leather, beer, candles, caps and hats, parasols and umbrellas, paper, playing cards, and saddles and bridles; also on watches, jewelry, gold, silver, and plated ware. But by the time of the Civil War, all of these had long been repealed and the only ordinary revenues of the federal government were derived exclusively from customs. On 5 August 1861, Congress passed an act, which was primarily intended to temporarily increase duties on imports, but it also imposed a direct tax of twenty million dollars to be assessed on land and collected for the government by the states. That did not stop the hemorrhaging of the treasury. A new law, passed on 1 July 1862, entitled, "An act to provide internal revenue for the support of the government and to pay interest on the public debt," established a new system of federal taxation. The Internal Revenue System was born and shortly thereafter, the first taxes on individual income were imposed.

Johann Friedrich and Catharina Sophia's daughter, Ernestine, became the first Heuer in the family to be married in the United States. She married a progressive and hard working young man named Heinrich (Henry) Friedrich Wilhelm Gericke on 4 July 1862, Independence Day. Ernestine was seventeen and Henry was twenty-seven. Mr. Vandoozer married them in a civil ceremony since there were no ministers available at the time. Henry had immigrated to America from Prussia in 1853 with his brother Johann. After first settling in New York and moving to various other places, Henry finally came to Ahnepee where he purchased four acres of land from Abraham D. Eveland. The land was located on the north side, just a block or so north of where St. Mary's Catholic Church stands today, and on the west side of Church Street. Henry was known to the Heuers as he was affiliated with the Lutheran church and may have met Ernestine there. She was also working in the town for the Evelands at the time. Henry built a large home on the four acres in 1861, and he and Ernestine opened a mercantile store there the following year.

The Civil War raged on, and fewer young Wisconsin men were volunteering. On 8 July 1862, four days after Ernestine and Henry were married, Wisconsin Governor Edward Salomon issued a plea to all young men to step forward and join the Union forces. He authorized monetary bounties and pay incentives to those who would volunteer and called for all citizens to report deserters to the authorities. Last of all, he directed the various town assessors to compile a militia list of all free, able-bodied male persons between the ages of eighteen and forty-five in their respective towns by the first Monday in September 1862. The lists, which were called enrollment lists, were published in the *Kewaunee Enterprise* by township, each township being a separate sub-district of the Provost Marshal's 5<sup>th</sup> District in Green Bay. August Heuer's name was listed in the highest class, class number one. His brothers, Ferdinand and Johann were not included. Their brother-in-law, Henry Gericke, was also listed in class one.

New immigrants had been arriving in ever-increasing numbers, and it became clear to the German Lutherans that the occasional visits by the missionary pastors would not meet their spiritual needs. The Wisconsin Synod, which had sent the missionary pastors among them, began a serious search for a minister. Pastor Brockmann answered the call and held services for the first time in December 1862. A meeting of the congregation was held on 10 December at which a constitution was accepted, officers were elected, and the name *Erste Deutsche Evangelische Lutherische St. Pauls Gemeinde* (First German Evangelical Lutheran St. Paul's Congregation) was adopted. The following eighteen men signed the constitution: Adolph Wickman, William Knospe, Christian Ebert, George Serrahn, Christian Braemer, Karl Schmeling, Henry Gericke, C. Neumann, Friedrich Schoenenmann, Karl Bieberitz, Friedrich Damas, F. Schlage, Caspar Zimmermann, George Sachtleben, Friedrich Kossow, August Krause, Christian Knospe, and Johann Beutling. The elected officers were: Adolph Wickman, secretary for one year, Johann Klensky, elder for two years, and Wilhelm Haack, elder for three years. Each man contributed



\$0.91, and along with the \$2.83 offering from the first service on 7 December, the newly formed church treasury was started with \$18.30. After paying \$13.27 to Peter Schiesser for rental of the building and construction costs for school desks, and \$4.00 to Friedrich Damas for firewood, the balance in the treasury was only \$1.01 on 1 January 1863. It was also resolved that the congregation would rent a house owned by Joseph Anderegg for \$4.00 per month to be used as an interim school and church. This house was located along the south side of the Ahnepee River between Third and Fourth streets. The congregation agreed that a stove would be purchased for \$8.00 – an obvious necessity since they were meeting and conducting classes and church services in an unheated building in the dead of winter.

The congregation met again in early February 1863 when they resolved to build a church on the north side of the river. The Lutherans in the Rankin area west of Ahnepee were organizing also, but until they could build a church, the Ahnepee congregation decided that Pastor Brockmann would maintain a residence on the south side of the river so he could minister to the Rankin and Forestville congregations.

The Catholics of Ahnepee also organized and built their first church on the north side in the 1862-63 period. The church was a small frame structure located just north of where St. Mary's Catholic Church stands today.

On the homestead farm, Johann Friedrich, Catharina Sophia, August, Bertha, and Augusta had settled into the routine that is farm life. Peter, Wilhelmine, and their three children on their nearby farm were doing the same. The three men worked together after the spring planting had been done, clearing more land and building more permanent structures for their animals. As it is with any farm, there was always something that needed to be done. The women were also busy, cooking three meals a day, baking, washing and mending clothes, minding the children, tending the garden, feeding the poultry, collecting eggs, canning meat, canning fruits and vegetables, and sewing in the evening. The saying was, "Men work from sun to sun, but women's work is never done." It must have seemed that way to these hardy pioneer women who had none of the modern conveniences, although their sons and daughters would see many of them in their lifetime. When the crops were ripe in late summer, everyone pitched in to cut, thresh, and store the wheat, dig the potatoes, and harvest the vegetables. When the cold of winter set in and the first snowstorms began, the routine continued, including: caring for the animals, bringing in wood for the stove, repairing equipment and harnesses, and whatever could be done under the harsh winter conditions. When a heavy snowstorm blew through the area, they could be shut in their homes for days, venturing out only to tend the animals.

Winter was the best time for the men to clear swampy areas on their land. Taking the trees and brush out allowed the soil to dry in the spring and summer, and that is how many lowlands were cleared. If it was possible, lowlands could be drained, but those techniques were seldom used in the early settlements around Ahnepee.

The newly founded St. Paul's Lutheran congregation proceeded with plans in 1863 to build a church on a parcel of land donated by Matthias Simon, a devout Roman Catholic. The lot was at the southeast corner of present-day Church and Arlington streets, on the north side of the river. Henry and Ernestine's new mercantile store was across the street and slightly to the south. The congregation borrowed \$50.00, and each member was assessed \$3.00 to complete the building. The small frame church was finished in late summer and dedicated on Sunday, 27 September 1863. The building would double as a school. The congregation worshiped for the first year in the unheated building, and on 15 September 1864 when they had collected enough money, they purchased a stove. On 18 April 1865, the congregation purchased, for a parsonage, the building they had been renting from Joseph Anderegg on the south side of the river. At first, services were conducted without an organ with the pastor leading the acapella singing. Henry and Ernestine Heuer Gericke were one of the founding members of the church as recorded in its history.

In 1863, the entire state was appraised by a board and the counties divided into eight classes – supposedly to suggest their value for agricultural purposes. Class one was valued at \$21 an acre; Class two at \$15; Class three at \$10; Class four at \$8; Class five at \$6; Class six at \$4; Class seven at \$3; and Class eight at \$2. Kewaunee and Door counties were both in Class eight. Their soil was judged to be nonproductive! The appraisers apparently never left their offices to view the land or test the soil, and the result of their error was that very good farmland was now more affordable than ever. However, as always, the land had to first be cleared. Some would say the appraisers were absolutely correct in their evaluation of the northern Door County land. But then, they probably had never seen cherry or apple blossoms either. Door County would become known for its huge production of cherries and apples.

The news in the spring of 1863 was not encouraging. From that time on, nearly every weekly mail brought tidings of death or sickness among the troops. Mrs. Janet Dalziel wrote her husband Robert a letter. It was returned and across its face was written, "*Your husband is dead.*" Many, many more stories like that one were circulated, and the war continued.

Ernestine and Henry Gericke's first child, Wilhelm Heinrich August Gericke, was born 12 June 1863 in Ahnepee Township. Wilhelm was baptized on 21 June in the Gericke home as the church was not yet finished. He was the first grandson of Johann Friedrich and Catharina Sophia. Ernestine's younger sister, Bertha, may have visited and stayed with Ernestine and Henry during this period. Bertha was preparing for her confirmation and she may have attended the Lutheran school just across the street.

On the Bergin farm west of Rankin, tragedy struck on 29 October 1863 when their second child, Wilhelmine Alwine Friedricke, died after a short illness. She was only three years and twenty-three days old when she died. There is no record

of her place of burial, but it is likely she was buried somewhere on the farm as there were no recorded cemeteries at the time. She was the first descendant of the Heuer family to die in the United States.

Meanwhile, the need for soldiers to fight for the Union kept increasing, and there were fewer volunteers as the war dragged on. President Lincoln wanted an end to the conflict but could not sustain the Union Army with volunteers alone. Thousands of soldiers had been killed in battle or wounded so badly they could no longer fight. Thousands more had died from disease. All of these factors caused both the Federal and State governments to initiate a draft to procure by law the numbers of soldiers needed to overcome the rebel forces.

Vicksburg had fallen, and the battle of Gettysburg had been fought. President Lincoln, on 17 October 1863, called for 300,000 more volunteers. Wisconsin Governor Salomon issued a proclamation calling for volunteers and offered a bounty of \$302.00 plus additional pay incentives to every man who would enlist. The enlistment was still too slow, and on 2 November a second draft was called. Ahnepee's quota was sixteen. Of the 124 drafted in November, sixty-four were excused because of old age, disability, or dependents relying on them for support. Twenty-one paid commutations of \$500.00 each and were released. Two were excused because they were full-blooded Indians.

The enrollment lists for the town of Ahnepee for the months of August, October, November, and December of 1863 included August Heuer and his brother-in-law, Henry Gericke, always as class number one. It appeared that this class of draft eligibles was all men between the ages of twenty-five to thirty, a common method of conducting a draft. The unspoken rule apparently was that this age group would be depleted first, then the younger group from eighteen to twenty-five, and finally, if necessary, the older group of those thirty to forty-five.

Volunteers mainly filled the quota for the first draft called in October 1863. During the second draft on 2 November neither Henry nor August was called. Another draft of 5 January 1864 called for only ten men from Ahnepee and again, neither of them was called. State authorities gave notice that the January draft would be suspended if the various towns would fill their quotas by enlistment. The quota for the town of Ahnepee was suspended by the recruiting done by Captain William I. Henry, Commanding Officer of the veteran Company E, 14<sup>th</sup> Wisconsin Infantry Regiment.

Captain Henry and his men had served with distinction in several hard-fought battles – Shiloh, Vicksburg, Corinth, and in the siege of Chattanooga. The entire company reenlisted in January and was sent home with the regiment on a veteran furlough. The heroes of Shiloh, Vicksburg, and Corinth were hailed with acclaim by the townspeople of Ahnepee and Kewaunee, and during their four weeks furlough were honored and entertained. Captain Henry took the occasion to fill the depleted ranks of his command.

We have no way of knowing why, but at this point young Johann Friedrich's life suddenly became a matter of public record. Now known as Fred, he had appeared again in Ahnepee, and Captain Henry or one of his veterans had convinced him to join the army. Perhaps it was to keep his brother August from being drafted, or maybe he decided the bounty money and other monetary incentives would give him the capital to purchase his own land. Maybe he merely wanted a new adventure. In any case, he volunteered and filled one of the quotas of ten for the town of Ahnepee. Johann Friedrich and Catharina Sophia had certainly not expected this to happen, but now one of their sons was going off to war. That had been one of the reasons they had left Prussia, to avoid the constant fighting and conscription of young men, and now it appeared to be no different in their new country.

The winter of 1863-64 was unusually harsh. Several severe, heavy snowstorms, accompanied by intense cold, made travel in the countryside virtually impossible. The severe weather continued into February, and when Captain Henry and his men were due to report back to Camp Washburn in Milwaukee on 25 February, they were still snowed in. On 27 February 1864, Johann Friedrich Heuer was enlisted into Company E, 14<sup>th</sup> Wisconsin Volunteer Infantry as a private for a three-year period. Captain Henry finally assembled his men on or about 5 March and departed for Camp Washburn, first by horse and wagon to Neenah and then by train to Milwaukee. Fred had said goodbye to his family and friends. He would soon be in Major General William Tecumseh Sherman's Federal Grand Army, with the first stop being Vicksburg, Mississippi. Those who also volunteered with Fred from Ahnepee were: Mortimer A. Bacon, Henry Bodett, Joseph E. Defaut, Abraham C. Eveland, Fred Kemp, Henry Schmeling, Julius Toebe, David L. Winters, Joseph Londo, and William Paronto. The enlistment of these men made it possible to cancel any further drafts from other towns in Kewaunee County at that time. At first, these men must have been quite happy to leave the intense cold of Wisconsin for the warmth of Mississippi, but that initial feeling of elation would soon be replaced by abject fear and fatigue.

In Ahnepee, tragedy struck the family of Ernestine and Henry Gericke when their son, Wilhelm Heinrich August, died on 15 March 1864. St. Paul's Lutheran Church records state his date of death was 19 March but his grave marker has 15 March. The first grandson of Johann Friedrich and Catharina Sophia had lived only nine months. He was one of the first to be buried in St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Cemetery in Ahnepee, established when the congregation purchased five acres of land north of Ahnepee on Wolf River Road.

August Heuer had been courting Caroline Augusta Marie Henriette Berndt, a daughter of the neighboring Friedrich Christoph Berndt family. Caroline was born in Steinmockler, Kries Anklam, Pommern, Prussia in 1843 and immigrated with her parents to the town of Wolf in 1854. In 1856, they moved to forty acres located about one-quarter mile east of Rankin. When the Heuer family purchased their homestead farm in 1859, the Berndt farm was only about one mile east-northeast

from their home. Caroline was then sixteen and August was twenty-three. In spite of the clouds of war hanging over their heads, August and Caroline decided to marry, and Pastor J. H. Brockmann conducted the ceremony on 15 May 1864 in the St. Paul's Lutheran School in Ahnepee. After their marriage, August and Caroline settled into the Heuer homestead. Johann Friedrich, Catharina Sophia, Bertha, and Augusta welcomed her into their home, a home that must have been very familiar to Caroline by now.

In July 1864, another enrollment was called, which consisted of every man fit for military service between the ages of twenty and forty-five. The enrollment was made in Kewaunee County under the direct supervision of Edward Decker, Deputy Provost Marshal for the county, who visited each town in the county for that purpose. As in the past, persons enrolled could appear before the draft board and secure exemptions for alienage, nonresidence, and unsuitableness of age, or manifest permanent physical disability. A great hue and cry was raised in the county when many favorites had not been enrolled at all. The immigrants of all nationalities began to understand that they were the ones being listed, while those with well-known names and status were allowed to escape the draft. In that regard, some things never change.

Edward Decker, the Deputy Provost Marshal for Kewaunee County, was another of "the clique" or "damned Yankees." Born in Casco, Maine, Decker migrated to Wisconsin, first to Menasha and then to Ahnepee where he began to amass a fortune. No man would have more influence in the political and business life of Kewaunee County. He was the first county clerk, the first banker, the first newspaper publisher, and the largest real estate dealer. While amassing his fortune through questionable deals, he was accused of rigging an election; levying disproportionate taxes on absentee landowners; using the tax laws to defraud Potawatomi Indians and others; and he was accused of using the interest earned on county funds for his private purposes – all while he was the first county clerk. During the Civil War, he bought substitutes to serve for himself and his brother, even as he served as the Deputy Provost Marshal whose duties were to conduct the draft and arrest and prosecute immigrant farmers who had evaded or deserted the army. He lived on a 1,500-acre estate in the village of Casco, Wisconsin where he owned the store, sawmill, and furniture factory. He cut the timber off his land, drained and cultivated it, and developed a first-rate dairy herd. Then he built a modern cheese factory. Even the name of the village could be attributed to Edward Decker. It is easy to see why he was not a favorite of the recently-arrived immigrants.

Special officers were designated to inform those who had been drafted so they had no excuse for not reporting. They were also informed that should they fail to report, a squad of soldiers would be sent to arrest them. Very few men, under these circumstances, failed to report. However, a few resisted and others fled the area. The situation was becoming serious for August, but he was hoping the war would end before he was needed.

Life went on in the town of Ahnepee. The town itself was bustling with activity, with new houses being built, new streets surveyed and constructed; and, at the sawmills and gristmills, business was brisk. New settlers continued to arrive and purchase land in the forests. The settlement of Belgian immigrants in the townships to the west of Ahnepee was growing at a steady pace. As with all immigrants, Belgian, German, Prussian, Bohemian, Swedish, Norwegian, and others, the newcomers settled on land that was close to friends and relatives they had known prior to leaving the old country. And even if they had not known their neighbors before, they at least shared the same culture and language.

Another draft for the 5<sup>th</sup> District was called at Green Bay for 10 August 1864. The town of Ahnepee was issued a quota of seventeen men, part of the total of 174 from all townships. The draft was postponed until 26 September, and the quota for all townships in Kewaunee County was reduced to 146 men. On that date the full quota from Kewaunee County was called, and those men were assigned to existing veteran regiments as replacements. August Ferdinand Heuer was one of those drafted along with nine more men from Ahnepee: Frederick Damon (Dammen), Frederick Kruger, George Feuerstein Jr., William Knospe (Knospy), Christian Knospe, Charles Madaky (Madsky), Zacharias Newman, Christian Braemer, and Friederick Madke (Maedke). The special officers no doubt informed them of all the consequences of not reporting.

It must have been a sad day for the Heuer family, especially Caroline, when August said his good-byes. He and Caroline had only been married for five months, and they were soon going to have a child of their own when he was drafted into military service in Green Bay on 3 October 1864. Private August Heuer was assigned to Company I, 17<sup>th</sup> Regiment of Wisconsin Infantry Volunteers, who were at that moment engaged in battle against General Hood's rebel forces in northern Georgia and Alabama. August would join them in Atlanta, Georgia on 14 November 1864, after basic training at Camp Randall in Madison followed by the long journey by boat and train.

On 12 October 1864, Johann Friedrich Heuer purchased from Peter and Barbara Schiesser thirty-seven acres, plus a fraction of an acre, for \$400.00 and received a warranty deed. The land is described as the southeast quarter of the southeast quarter, section twenty-three, Ahnepee Township. This land is now bordered on the south by Bay Road, the Algoma city limits; on the east by the shore of Lake Michigan, with County Highway S running through it along the shoreline; on the north by the line fence of the late Lorenz Gericke farm at the intersection of S and Carnot Drive; and on the west by Walnut Road. This quarter was not a full forty acres because the southeast corner extended into Lake Michigan. We believe Johann Friedrich purchased this land at the request of his son, Fred, who may have given his father money from his savings while employed as a sailor and his enlistment bonus. The land was virgin forest, close to the lake and to the town, and that is where Fred wanted to settle after the war.

While August and Fred were marching to the sea with General Sherman's army from mid-November to 21 December

1864, the Heuer, Bergin, and Gericke families could only hope and pray for their safe return. August and Fred may have sent news home that they had spent some time together in Savannah, Georgia after the city fell on 21 December and the army was resting before proceeding north.

The next month on 17 January 1865, Caroline gave birth to a daughter whom she named Emilie. Her husband August was on the same day marching north through the swamps of South Carolina interrupted only by daily engagements with rebel forces. Nine days later on 26 January, Ernestine also gave birth to a daughter who was named Ida Rose Emilie Gericke. Letters with this news were undoubtedly sent to August and Fred, but it may have taken two weeks or more to reach them.

In Ahnepee the draft calls continued, one in February and one in March. Henry Gericke, Ernestine's husband, was drafted and reported to Green Bay on 22 March 1865. Some of the nineteen other men drafted with him were in their forties, while Henry was nearly thirty. For some reason unexplained by the records, Henry was not inducted and sent home. It was a joyful day for the Gericke family.

The good news about the progress of the war, coming to Ahnepee from August and Fred and from other sources, clearly meant the end was near. Then, on 9 April 1865, came the news that General Robert E. Lee had surrendered at Appomattox, Virginia and that set off a great celebration in the town of Ahnepee. Four days later, the men and boys of the town decided they would erect a liberty pole. They labored all day in Eveland's swamp to cut and trim the pole. They carried it down Steele Street and planted it in front of Franz Swaty's store. They were about to raise the flag in token of the victory when the Two Rivers mail carrier brought the news that President Abraham Lincoln had been assassinated in Ford's Theater in Washington and Vice President Johnson was sworn in as president. The flag was raised to half-mast with great joy quickly turning into great sorrow.

For August and Fred, General Lee's surrender and the President's death did not mean they could go home. August's unit, Company I, 17<sup>th</sup> Wisconsin Infantry Regiment departed Raleigh, North Carolina and advanced north once again. They participated in the battle for Bennet's House and, on 26 April 1865, were observers to the surrender of General Johnston and his army in Durham's Station. Fred was nearby in Worden's Battalion – the unit that had been guarding and assisting in the erection of pontoon bridges over the rivers in the path of the army from Atlanta to Savannah and through the Carolinas to Virginia. The fighting was over, but the army was ordered to proceed to Washington where they would participate in the Grand Review.

Less than a week after the surrender, President Johnson issued an order for all drafts to cease and for all conscripted men in training or in detention camps to return to their homes. On 1 May, after the surrender of General Johnston, another order was issued calling for the discharge of all regiments where terms of enlistment would expire before 1 October. This would bring home most of the Wisconsin regiments in June, July, and August. The 3<sup>rd</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, 12<sup>th</sup>, 17<sup>th</sup>, 18<sup>th</sup>, 21<sup>st</sup>, and 43<sup>rd</sup> organizations in which Kewaunee County men were serving would be inactivated and the men mustered out. Johann Friedrich, Catharina Sophia, and Caroline must have been elated to hear this news. At least this meant that August would soon be home again and would get to see his daughter, Emilie, for the first time. But it was not to be.

Now that the war was over, Ferdinand, the middle son returned home from his sojourn. He had been working away from Ahnepee since 1862 and had traveled as far south as St. Louis, looking for a desirable place to locate. He never served in the Civil War. Upon his return, he purchased forty acres of land adjacent to the Bergin farm on the west side.

Meanwhile, August and Fred were marching with their respective units toward Washington. August became very ill and was taken to a military hospital where he died on 22 May 1865. His records only state that he died in Alexandria, Virginia of typhoid fever, nothing more.

We do not know how the news of August's death reached the extended Heuer family in Ahnepee. Perhaps Fred was made aware of his death by members of August's company, and Fred sent a letter informing the folks at home. However it happened, when the news came it could hardly be believed. August had survived a great deal of fighting only to be struck down after the war's end by disease. Since his death was not immediately brought to closure with a wake and funeral, it would take months before the realization that August would never return home could be accepted.

Fred would not return home soon either as his unit, Company E, Worden's Battalion, was ordered to rejoin the 14<sup>th</sup> Wisconsin Infantry Regiment after marching in the Grand Review in Washington on 25 May 1865. The 14<sup>th</sup> was then located in Montgomery, Alabama. It was a long journey, but Fred and his fellow members of Company E finally joined the 14<sup>th</sup> in Montgomery on 16 July. They remained there on guard duty, not knowing if they would be called to fight once again. The 14<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> Wisconsin Infantry Regiments were part of an army under the command of General Sheridan who had been sent south to prevent Emperor Maximilian, then making his last stand in Mexico, from retreating over into American territory. The United States, by sending this force, also wanted to give the French emperor a warning that it was now in a position to enforce the Monroe Doctrine.

Wisconsin and Kewaunee County had contributed their share, maybe even more than that, to the country during the Civil War. The state had supplied the Union Army with fifty-two infantry regiments, plus units of cavalry, artillery, sharpshooters, scouts, sailors, black troops, and even three brigade bands. It has been estimated that for every nine persons living in the state, Wisconsin furnished one soldier. Of the estimated 80,595 individual enlistments from the state, more than 11,000 died of battle wounds or disease or were reported missing in action.<sup>10</sup>

Kewaunee County furnished 408 men, although that number may not be entirely accurate because of the looseness of the record keeping. The county had a census population of 7,039, which meant it sent one man for every seventeen people to the war. In addition to this, the poor and struggling pioneers of 1861-65 raised the sum of \$20,692.87 in taxes, money actually paid by the several towns of the county to support the war. In many instances, the men who volunteered or were drafted left their families with no support except the pay of a private, which at first was only \$12.00 per month.

After the war, there were some faces missing in Wisconsin communities. However, there were not many handicapped ex-soldiers in evidence. The reason being that if soldiers were wounded, they usually died from their wounds and did not return to their homes. Even after death, bodies were not returned to loved ones. Some of the dead were not given individual graves or grave markers. Instead, bodies were haphazardly accounted for, and in areas where large battles took place, there were so many deaths that mass graves were commonplace.

Wisconsin did not seem to be greatly affected by the recent Civil War. There was no evidence of the rebuilding that was necessary as in the southern states. The demand for corn and grain was greatly increased, but the Wisconsin farmers would soon see themselves being replaced by the farmers of the flatlands, Mississippi and Missouri, as the producers of these crops. Over the next thirty years, Wisconsin's farmers would gear up and make their mark as the top producers of milk and all of its by-products, which would be shipped all over the country. Meat packing companies would then begin to flourish in the state – Green Bay and Milwaukee being the centers – with companies like Swift, Morris, and Armour among the largest.

Once the shock of August's death had been accepted, the Heuer family began to think of the future. Ferdinand, now the oldest surviving son, took over his brother's responsibilities for the home farm. Johann Friedrich and Catharina Sophia had already decided that they would deed the homestead farm to Caroline, as they would have to August. On 18 September 1865, they accomplished that by giving Caroline Berndt Heuer a warranty deed for the eighty acres for the amount of \$450.00. Although that is what the deed said, it is doubtful that any money changed hands.

Fred was discharged on 9 October 1865 in Montgomery, Alabama. He and the other veterans from Ahnepee who served in the 14<sup>th</sup> Wisconsin Infantry Regiment made their way home from Alabama, by now a familiar journey. The returning soldiers were welcomed with open arms and there were tears of joy and thanksgiving. The homecoming was anticlimactic and short-lived for returning veterans. They were faced with the reality of establishing their lives again. After enjoying the excitement of the homecoming and observing the changes that had occurred in the town over the past twenty months, Fred spent some time with his parents and relatives in Rankin. He then visited his property in Ahnepee and began making plans for the cabin he would have to build. On 27 November 1865, he purchased an additional forty acres of wooded land due north of his property.

The new settlement had changed in Fred's eyes. Ahnepee had grown but it also experienced setbacks, and its occupants quickly learned that every stranger that ventured into town was not bound by honorable intentions. The following is a story published years later in the 14 September 1967 edition of the *Algoma Record-Herald* about a slick new citizen:

#### **New Arrival Century Ago Was Sleek in Manner, Fleet Afoot**

Bill Chadwick dropped into Wolf River (Algoma) one fall day in 1866. He was a sleek, smooth-faced, rather prepossessing young man, somewhat quiet and reserved. He was out of the class of boisterous, hard-drinking and rough-spoken woodsmen who sailed upon the lake in the open water season and worked in the woods in towns along the shore during winter months.

Every winter Wolf River had many of this class of transients. In 1866, Bill drifted in with them. He lodged with Capt. William H. McDonald at the Ahnepee House and readily secured a job as teamster.

Wolf River soon observed that Chadwick was more refined and high-toned than the usual longshoreman. While "Black Jack" and his crowd were hilariously irrigating at the bar, shuffling greasy decks of cards, or engaged in rough horse-play, William was off in a quiet corner reading a book. He occasionally attended "meeting" in the old school house and sometimes went to Sunday school.

These unusual and most favorable signs soon worked Chadwick into the good graces of the better part of the community, and long before the ice went out in the spring, William gave promise of becoming a useful member of society.

Along about the time the ice banks began to loosen their grip on the Wolf Riverites in the spring, Chadwick, with becoming modesty, approached a local lawyer and, in a matter-of-fact way, insinuated that he had recently inherited quite a fortune from some relative in the east, and wanted advice as to the best way of getting money into the Wolf River wilderness, then beyond railroads, telegraph wires and express companies. And the lawyer told him how.

#### **Feeling was Mutual**

It soon became generally known about town that Bill Chadwick was heir to thousands. All of Wolf River grasped his hand and congratulated him. Bill was duly appreciative. He said he liked the town and he liked the people, and he thought he would marry some nice little Wolf River girl and stay right among them and spend his thousands developing the splendid natural resources of the country.

This, of course, increased his popularity. In fact, Bill became so popular that spring that he might have been

lected supervisor, justice of the peace, road-master, or to any other office within the gift of the people.

Again he sought services of a lawyer. He gradually unfolded unto that gentleman his deep seated purpose of engaging in business here, and he further stated that he had a philanthropic desire to engage in some business that would give labor and result in the most benefit to the entire community.

He said that his early education had been neglected; that he was unacquainted with business methods, and that he would need the almost daily advice of an attorney as paternal counsel and suggestion. He ended the interview by hiring the lawyer to become his legal advisor at a salary of \$100 per annum.

Capt. McDonald owned and conducted the Ahnapee House, largest of the Wolf River hotels, and was an active man of affairs. The captain wanted a wider field of activity and he felt that his business abilities were narrow and circumscribed within the four dingy walls of the Ahnapee House barroom. He proposed a partnership to Chadwick and the latter, after carefully looking into the captain's character and antecedents, was satisfied. After many consultations with his lawyer, he concluded to enter a partnership. The firm of Chadwick and McDonald became a reality.

### **Excitement Increases**

For a few days following these disclosures, Wolf River was in a high state of excitement and hopefulness. Chadwick would spend his untold thousands right here! He proposed to establish a great new mercantile establishment, where goods could be purchased upon principles of equity and fairness. He also decided that the community wanted a big, new grist mill, where the oppressed farmers might get a better deal in bringing their grist to mill.

And in the eyes of Bill, the old Ahnapee House looked plain and inadequate for the needs of the traveling public – that traveling public which made the town once a week and came in on the mail carrier's buckboard. He proposed a fine new hotel.

With Bill, to think was to act. He engaged carpenters and workmen; he was closeted with builders and contractors, making plans, and he held long and mysterious daily conferences with his legal advisor. Chadwick was the busiest man in all Wolf River. The new dawn of a new era seemed to be at hand.

Chadwick directed his junior partner, Capt. McDonald, to proceed at once to Chicago and purchase a ten thousand dollar stock of goods for their new store. He gave his partner a draft for \$1,000 upon a Chicago bank to meet incidental expenses, and instructed him upon his arrival in Chicago to proceed at once to the Sherman House where he would find Chadwick's father awaiting him and prepared to advance all necessary funds. He gave the captain letters of introduction and started him off.

In those days, travel was slow. Capt. McDonald set out upon a sail vessel.

No sooner had the vessel left port, than things began moving in Wolf River. Chadwick called upon the merchants, capitalists and businessmen of the town. He told them of his plans, said he was a little short of ready money to pay his workmen to carry on his business, but that as soon as his partner got back he would be well supplied.

### **William Got All**

Out came wallets, stockings and money drawers. Chadwick could have anything he wanted, and William took it. He sent men into the woods to get out timber for the new mill. He set carpenters to work tearing down the old Ahnapee House. Just how much money Chadwick relieved the merchants and businessmen of Wolf River was never learned. There was not much currency in general circulation here in those days, but whatever there was, William took.

Perhaps the wildest place in town was the bar of the Ahnapee House. The woodsmen were just out of the forest with their winter's pay. Chadwick was behind the bar. Men lined up 10 deep trying to get a chance to spend their money with him. Whenever there was a temporary lull in business, Chadwick would order up Capt. McDonald's choicest liquors and pass them out freely. He not only got the woodsmen's money, but he also got rid of his partner's stock of liquor. It was one of the best all around good times ever experienced in this community.

But time drew on and word from Captain Bill in Chicago could be expected. Chadwick decided to bring things to a dramatic finale.

Capt. McDonald's qualities included good horsemanship. And, he drove a fine trotter, valued by him at \$1,000. This beast was the pride of the captain's heart and he never permitted anyone to drive it but himself.

One morning, however, Chadwick ordered the horse hitched up and invited Nell McLean to take a ride with him to Kewaunee. He explained it was necessary for him to go there to purchase lumber for his new buildings.

He drove down to Boalt's store, jumped out, and rushing into the store, said, "Boalt, I've got to ride down to Kewaunee today and haven't got an overcoat fit to wear."

"Go right in there and pick out the best one you can find," said the genial judge, slapping Chadwick upon the back.

Not the slightest thing of any consequence in Mr. Chadwick's eyes were left behind him in Wolf River. He recalled that Charley McDonald had a fine pair of fur mittens, and he asked the loan of them for the day. Then, snugly tucked up behind Wolf River's fastest pacer, he turned his face southward.

### **Pawns Captain's Pacer**

At Kewaunee, he managed to give his companion, McLean, the slip. He borrowed \$100 from a hotel keeper upon the captain's pacer and left the animal in pawn, and after selling Charley McDonald's gloves for \$4 to a saloon keeper, he left the village and started south on foot.

Meanwhile, Capt. Bill McDonald, with visions of future big business wafting before his eyes, had reached Chicago. He presented his check for \$1,000 at the bank window and was met with the cashier's bland smile and soft answer, "No funds." He searched the lobby of the Sherman House and found no one there answering to the description or name of Chadwick to whom he could present his letter of introduction.

And then it began to dawn on Capt. Bill that he was the victim of a "fool's errand." He hurried back to Racine and employed Billy Osborne with his fastest team to drive him back to Wolf River. With reflections anything but amiable, the big captain began his journey northward.

Upon the afternoon of the second day, when just this side of Two Rivers, the captain and his companion discerned a man approaching along the highway on foot, and as the travelers approached, soon made out that the fellow was no other than his partner, Mr. Chadwick. The recognition was mutual.

But Chadwick was no ordinary cheapskate of a swindler. He belonged to a higher and more versatile order. His self possession and resourcefulness at this critical moment would have won him laurels upon the field of battle.

Without the slightest hesitation, Chadwick shouted to his partner, "It's all right, Bill! Just a little mistake! Father is right back there about a mile at that big white house on the right side of the road." He pointed to a farm house ahead of him.

Drawing near, Chadwick explained how his father had concluded not to stop in Chicago but was hurrying along to Wolf River with a big drove of horses, and had stopped over at the house in question to bring the drove up.

### **Completely Deceived**

Completely deceived, the captain and his companion were satisfied with the truth of his statements.

"I'll get right in with you and drive back," said Chadwick, and suiting the words of action he climbed in the conveyance. He seated himself between McDonald and Osborne and the trio drove back along the road.

"That's father now!" Chadwick shouted as they approached the house and noticed a man standing at the gate. As he spoke, he leaped out of the conveyance, rushed up to the farmer at the gate and shook hands with him cordially. He then slipped past him and disappeared into the house.

McDonald and Osborne were left seated in the buggy. They saw the figure of Chadwick going in at the front door and soon after emerge from the rear door, run rapidly across the field and disappear in the woods beyond. Captain Bill and Osborne turned and looked each other in the eye. Then after a long pause, Capt. Bill ejaculated.

"Hell!!!"

The captain drove home and paid the bills of the firm of Chadwick and McDonald, like the square man that he was.

One day, he assembled the habitués of the Ahnepee House in the barroom and addressed them:

"Boys, I'll lick the everlasting stuffing out of the galoot who ever refers disrespectfully to my late partner. Come up and irrigate!"

Johann Friedrich and Catharina Sophia were both now in their late fifties. Bertha and Augusta were growing up and would soon be married. The homestead was crowded with them and Ferdinand, Caroline, and her daughter, Emilie, living there. Caroline and Ferdinand, who had known each other as neighbors for over eight years, had decided to get married. On 10 March 1866, Ferdinand continued an old tradition when he married Caroline, his older brother's widow, in St. Paul's Lutheran School in Ahnepee. They might have stood on the same spot where Caroline had married August on 15 May 1864.

By this time, Fred had built a suitable cabin on his land north of the town of Ahnepee. In mid-1866, Johann Friedrich, Catharina Sophia, Bertha, and Augusta moved from Rankin to live with Fred in his new home. That left Ferdinand, Caroline, and Emilie on the homestead farm with the Bergins on their farm nearby.

Bertha and Augusta now were able to attend the Lutheran school on Church Street. The tuition was \$1.00 per pupil with half going to the church treasury.

On 11 August 1866, a fourth daughter was born to Wilhelmine and Peter on their Rankin farm. They named her Wilhelmine Alwine Rosaline. It was not surprising or unusual that this child was given the first two names of her sister who had died in 1863; it was the custom. Only the name Rosaline was new, but little Wilhelmine was always called "Minnie."

Fred, now twenty-four, with his parents and two sisters settled in his new home, decided to get married. On 8 December 1866, he married Anna Rosina Damas in a civil ceremony conducted by G. W. Elliott, a Justice of the Peace. Fred had known Anna Rosina since 1859 when the Damas family settled on forty acres about one mile due east of the Heuer homestead in Rankin. The Damas family was from Militsch, Silesia, Prussia where Anna was born 4 June 1849. On 15 July 1863, the Damas' moved to the north side of the town of Ahnepee, to a forty lying cater-corner to the land, which is now St. Mary's Catholic Church Cemetery. That property was only three-quarters of a mile west of the land purchased in 1864 by Johann Friedrich for his son Fred. Anna Rosina joined the Heuer household, now numbering six, in what must have been cramped quarters.

In the town of *Ahnepee*, the first vessel to be built there began to take shape during the winter of 1866 and spring of 1867. It was the scow named *Ahnepee*, owned and built by Captain Martin Larkins of Ahnepee, and Horton and Brothers of Chicago. When the *Ahnepee* was launched into the river in May 1867, she immediately sailed to Chicago to complete her

interior and be registered. Because she was entered into service in the port of Chicago, she was christened *Ahnepee of Chicago*.

The second vessel built in Ahnepee was the scow *Irene*. She was built in the spring of 1867 and was owned entirely by citizens of the town and built by Ahnepee workmen. She was sloop-rigged, and when launched into the river, sailed to the port of Manitowoc to be registered and entered into service. Manitowoc was the nearest port of entry to Ahnepee where ships could be registered, according to the regulations regarding the registering of vessels. Consequently, the *Irene* was officially listed as hailing from Manitowoc although she had been built in Ahnepee. The *Irene* sailed between Ahnepee and ports to the south for several seasons before two of her Ahnepee owners, Abraham Hall and H. N. Smith, sold their interest in her to their partner Captain Henry Harkins, who later sold her to parties in Milwaukee.

During the summer of 1868, Charles Griswold Boalt, then residing in Ahnepee, built a fine large schooner named the *Bessie Boalt*. This vessel was built and launched from the lakeshore, between the north and south pier that existed at the time. She was patterned after a neat model prepared by Major William I. Henry, ex-commanding officer of Company E, 14<sup>th</sup> Wisconsin Infantry Regiment. William Henry also supervised the construction of the vessel, and when it was completed it was staunch, a fast sailer, and very seaworthy, meeting all expectations of her owners. Like the other vessels built in Ahnepee, the *Bessie Boalt* was registered in another port, but the town deserves the credit for being the place where she was built.

The first steam tug built in Ahnepee for towing on the river was constructed by William Nelson and Abisha Perry in the spring of 1867. She was put to work immediately, towing scows up and down the river, usually taking empty scows up the river and bringing them down loaded with ties, posts, cordwood, bark, telegraph poles, lumber, shingles, and other wood products. The tug was built similarly to an ordinary river scow with the addition of a cabin. She was propelled by a large, wooden stern wheel resembling, excepting the length of the paddles, the wheel of a side-wheel steamer. The tug was perfectly suited for river towing. Her shallow draft permitted her to run up to the Forestville bridge – a distance of nine miles – at nearly all seasons of the year. After several seasons, with her ownership changing several times, the tug was finally purchased by two men named Ross and Warner. She was then reconfigured as a scow, with the cabin removed and decked over and the steam engine removed and sold.

Ross and Warner built the second tug ever constructed in the town of Ahnepee. The boat was named the *William I. Henry* in honor of the man who supervised the construction. The *William I. Henry* was entirely different from the previous model. She was propelled by a screw wheel, a new design for tugs providing more power on the tow. The *William I. Henry* was used in Ahnepee for only one season before being sent to Sturgeon Bay and sold to one of the sawmill companies. There she was used to tow logs from booms to the sawmill on the Sturgeon Bay shore.

Yet another tug was built by Ross and Warner to replace the *William I. Henry*. This new tug, named the *Betsey*, was finished in the summer of 1872 and put to work on the Ahnepee River. She was a side-wheel tug with a flat bottom, very suited to river towing. The *Betsey* served for many seasons on the Ahnepee River, towing the scows to and from Forestville.

The era of vessel building in Ahnepee did not last long. The new harbor, soon to come, changed the waterfront and how it would be used. There would be some fishing vessels built here later, but the large vessels soon became iron clad and then made entirely of steel, causing their construction, by necessity, to be in larger, deeper ports.

To understand the conditions that existed in 1868, it is always best to obtain the information from one who lived it. George W. Wing, the chronicler of the early Algoma history, was quoted in the following article in the *Algoma Record-Herald* edition of 15 August 1968, written by a wonderful hometown journalist, Lois Pflughoeft:

### **Pioneer Algoma Is Revisited Thru Eyes of Freckle-Faced Boy**

By LOIS PFLUGHOEFT

Instead of today's network of streets and alleys, Algoma had but two streets 100 years ago. And it had three roads leading into the surrounding countryside.

A wooden bridge crossed the river at a point about where Church street is located today; "the point" was the busiest spot in the community; the area south of Steele and east of Fourth was a knoll of stumps, cedars and fallen logs, and traveling bands of Indians pitched wigwams on the lake shore.

The two streets were Steele (named after George Steele, one of the original proprietors) and Fourth, along which there was a scant fringe of houses. They were sandy and not completely cleared of stumps. The roads were of sawdust and slab corduroy.

One road led across "the swamp" to a point two or three miles west, where it became lost in other swamps. It was known as "Hall's Mill road." There was also the "Three Mile Road," leading across the river and along the lake bluffs to a hamlet at the north where Capt. Charley Ross, Perry Austin, the Bergs and a few other pioneers lived, and then there was a road leading west to the "English settlement" and to a place vaguely known as "the Belgian settlement."

One day, while crossing "the swamp," now Perry Field, Dave Youngs' yoke of stags was killed by a falling



tree. It was dragging a load of timber through the deep mud and mire.

On Saturdays – steamboat day – a strange procession moved along the English settlement road.

These were among the reminiscences of George Wing, who some 50 years ago recalled, his boyhood and early impressions of pioneer life in a series of articles which appeared in the Algoma Record, the newspaper which he founded and served as first editor.

### **Steamboat Day**

“To my childish imagination they excited the greatest interest,” Wing recalled of the steamboat day procession, “They wore wooden shoes, and to me, fantastic costumes; they chattered in a strange, wild language which gave me the impression that they were always mad about something. They were usually accompanied by a bunch or two of shaved shingles, which they dragged upon a hand sled, and I have even seen a crude cart drawn by a cow used for the conveyance of their only marketable product of trade – a bunch of cedar shingles, tiresomely made with a draw-shave.”

“These were the brave and hardy Belgian pioneers of Lincoln and Red River, who had left their homes in their native land but two or three years before to hew out of the forests of America new destinies for themselves and children. And how grandly they have succeeded!”

There may have been a road to Kewaunee in the late 1860’s, but the limit of a small, freckle-faced boy’s horizon to the south were Ed and Jim Tweedale’s and Seymour Thayer’s places. Beyond that was a limitless expanse of forest from whose unknown depths a young man came once a week, riding a mule and bringing “the Two Rivers mail.”

All that part of Algoma to the east of Fourth street and south of Steele, except the fringe of frame houses, was a common of knolls, stumps, clumps of cedars and thistle, fallen logs and briar bushes.

Wing lived on Fourth street and in his writings he related, “It required considerable nerve to make the journey across this common to the lake shore beyond.”

### **Feared “Wolf”**

“I think the name of the place must have been devised to frighten the incorrigible youngsters of those pioneer days,” Wing wrote. “I was always keenly on the alert for that imaginary ‘wolf’ which was supposed to have his haunts somewhere in the vicinity.”

“Besides, scarcely a day passed but that the wig-wags of traveling bands of Menominees, Chippewas and Pottawottamies were pitched upon the lake shore, and the mothers of those days never tired of impressing upon their children that they would surely be carried off by the Indians if they strayed beyond the gate post.”

All three roads led to “the pier” or to “the mouth.”

This mouth was the point where the black, sluggish waters of the Wolf river – as it was known before becoming the Ahnapee – entered the lake and discolored its surface for a great distance around.

Here was the center of all commercial life and activity. At the top of the incline stood a frame building known as “Youngs” store. It was also the postoffice, as well as the emporium of trade, where corn meal and other delicacies of the season were exchanged for ties, posts, bark and wood. DeWayne Stebbins, clerk, did most of the exchanging.

Moving power and driving motor of the town, Wing said, was Dave Youngs – “a canny Scotchman with a long red beard and kindly ways. He lived, a widower, with his three children in a long, low rambling house just west of the store. The pier, the town site, the dock, the big flat-bottomed boats which navigated the river were his.”

Youngs also owned an old board sleigh “jumper” which was the pride of Wolf River in the winter and a buckboard which could make time over the corduroys at other seasons.

### **Why Any Faster?**

“The modern automobile was not in it, so far as style is concerned, when I think of that jumper and buckboard,” Wing wrote in 1910. “Why, if the weather was good and the roads fair, one could drive down to Kewaunee in one day and get back by the evening of the next. And who lived in Wolf River that cared to ride any faster?”

Communication to Forestville was by water. Scows, wafted by ungainly sails, made trips to and fro once a week. If wind and weather were fair, they could make as much as a mile in two hours, and when the wind failed the sturdy scowmen resorted to poles and speed was measured by inches.

It was at “the mouth” that the scows landed their freight from Forestville and up river ports; that fish boats wandering along the shores tied up for the night or in high winds; where whitewinged vessel came from over the blue waters from somewhere; that the weekly steamboat landed; here that the fishermen brought in their daily catches of whitefish, and the men of the town toiled unloading scows and loading vessels.

Today, when the river upstream is often lonesome and deserted, it’s hard to conceive that 100 years ago it was a busy, teeming highway of traffic and navigation with regular ports along its shores.

There were Hilton’s Dock, Schmilng’s Landing, Munn’s Dock, Eveland’s Dock and, finally, Forestville, where the weary scowmen tied up for the night, or stopped longer to take on a freight of wood, ties and posts.

Later the scow steamer, with stern paddle wheel, was used upon the river for towing purposes.

### **Fishing Recalled**

The bridge crossed the Wolf River about 300 feet from its mouth and in a line with what is now Church street. The river found its outlet into the lake just below the bluff, near a point where William Henry lived.

“My principal recollection of this old wooden bridge,” Wing wrote, “is the joy I used to experience in lying

flat upon my stomach upon it and spearing suckers. The river literally abounded in suckers and red horse in the spring of the year, but fine, fat whitefish were so cheap and plentiful that but a few school-tired boys cared to waste time in catching anything so plebeian as a sucker. They were a joke.”

For Johann Friedrich and Catharina Sophia, the years between 1866 and 1870 passed in relative calm. They lived on the farm with Fred, Anna Rosina, and their two daughters, Bertha and Augusta. Their married children produced four more grandchildren. Three of them were girls, and one boy, Franz Christian Friedrich Gericke, who only survived two-and-one-half years. Neither of their sons had yet produced a grandson for them so the Heuer name seemed to be in jeopardy. Some of the family members had purchased more land and were developing their farms and businesses.

Augusta had been confirmed in St. Paul’s Evangelical Lutheran Church in the spring of 1869. On 12 August 1869, Bertha married a young man, Charles Wilhelm Gottfried Zastrow, who had purchased and settled on land two-and-one-half miles north of Forestville. Charles was born in Berlin, Germany on 12 August 1847. His family emigrated to the United States in 1857, first settling in Cedarburg, Wisconsin and then moving to Ahnepee in 1865. Charles purchased the above-mentioned land in 1867 and built his log cabin home on it. Bertha Heuer had been working in the town of Ahnepee and that is probably how they met. After their marriage, Charles and Bertha set up housekeeping on the land north of Forestville.

The Federal Census of 1870 for Ahnepee Township showed that many changes had taken place since the census of 1860. Of course, by now Johann Friedrich and Catharina Sophia were living with their son, Fred, north of the town of Ahnepee. Following is how they were listed:

Name	Age	Sex	Color	Profession Occupation or Trade	Value of Real Estate	Value of Personal Property	Place of Birth
Heyer, Fred Jr.	28	M	W(hite)	Farmer	\$2,500.00	\$700.00	Prussia
Rosa	21	F	W(hite)	Keeping House			Prussia
Heyer, Fred Sr.	61	M	W(hite)	Gardener			Prussia
Sophia	63	F	W(hite)	Keeping House			Prussia
Augusta	1	F	W(hite)				Prussia

As usual, there were errors. The surnames were misspelled. Fred Jr. would be twenty-eight in October. Johann Friedrich (Fred Sr.) and Catharina Sophia (Sophia) were both sixty-two. Augusta was fifteen. It is interesting to note that Johann Friedrich’s occupation was listed as gardener. Perhaps that was now his hobby as we suspect his health was failing at this point.

Businesses were springing up in the town of Ahnepee at a rapid pace. Henry Fax and Brothers had a dry goods and grocery store on the corner of First and Steele streets. The business had been started in 1866 and was first located on Fourth Street. They also purchased ties, posts, bark, wood, and farm produce. Samuel Perry owned and operated a dry goods and grocery trade on the corner of Third and Steele streets. He also bought ties, posts, bark, and farm produce. Both stores had sample rooms with catalogs and sample merchandise, and billiard halls. Sam Perry also owned a livery stable. William N. Perry owned and operated the only store where drugs, medicine, and medical supplies were sold exclusively. It was located on Steele Street, one door west of Sam Perry’s store. Mike McDonald, who started his store selling groceries on the corner of Second and Steele streets, was now operating it on Steele Street, between Lake and First streets. J. R. McDonald, on the corner of Second and Steele streets, dealt exclusively in groceries, cigars, and other specialty items. William Palmer sold a general assortment of feed and provisions and also had a wholesale and retail fruit department. F. Paarman, on Fourth Street opposite Wisconsin House, the hotel operated by W. Boedecker, had a store where he sold dry goods and groceries. He also owned a feed and provision store, dealing in ties, posts, bark, farm produce, and other goods.

The only harness shop in the town was owned and operated by Matthias Kumbalek. He manufactured saddles, collars, harnesses, and had a good assortment of accessories for the care of horses. The store was on South Water Street. Mark McCormick operated a grocery store on Steele and Second Street. Franz Swaty also operated a dry goods and grocery store at the corner of Steele and Water streets. The Ahnepee saloon on State Street was operated by Bernard Housse. Miss Mollie McDonald operated a news depot on South Water Street. She kept a constant supply of all the leading periodicals of the day; sold stationery and confections; was an agent for Singer sewing machines; and housed the telegraph office. A. S. Eveland, the only jeweler in the town, did not stock jewelry but instead repaired watches, clocks, and all kinds of jewelry. Matthias Reinhart manufactured and sold ready-made boots and shoes from his store on Fourth Street, between Clarke and Fremont. He also repaired shoes and boots and all sorts of leather products. William Kuhlman had a sign painting business and also painted houses. Matthias Zimmerman operated a butcher shop on Steele Street where he sold fresh meats, ham, salt pork,



*According to newspaper accounts, Mathias Reinhart opened his first shoe store on Fourth Street. It was then moved to Steele Street in 1866. Three years later, in 1869, the structure shown above was built a few doors east on Steele Street. The team of oxen pictured here in front of the store was somewhat unusual. Most farmers used horses instead because they were stronger and some would argue, smarter. The ox team and wagon may have been involved in the construction of Steele Street as there are large rocks piled along the sidewalk. The church window visible in the middle left background was in the old Lutheran Church. (Courtesy of Kewaunee County Historical Society)*

and sausages. He also bought animal hides for cash. J. G. Weilep operated the Ahnepee House, a hotel on the corner of Steele and Second streets. Leopold Meyer sold stoves and manufactured tin ware from his business on the east side of Second Street near the bridge. A. C. J. Gritzmacher sold new clothing from his store on the corner of South Water and Steele streets. He had a full stock of clothing consisting of broadcloths, doeskins, cashmere, vestings, and a variety of heavy winter clothes.

One of the most noteworthy institutions of the town was the large, three-story brick brewery on Water Street known as the Ahnepee Brewery. It was owned by W. Stransky and Company and built in 1869. It was the only brick building of any considerable size in the town, in fact, in the county, except for the county courthouse in Kewaunee, which had not yet been completed. Besides the main brick building, there was a large wooden addition on the west side. The building was furnished throughout with everything necessary for the brewery trade. It contained several cool and commodious cellars for the storage of beer and ample room for the storage of barley. It was also furnished with a patented windmill, which reduced a great deal of expense and labor. David Youngs was now the Postmaster, and he operated the stage lines from the post office building. People could take a stagecoach to Sturgeon Bay via Clay Banks or Forestville; to Green Bay through Casco; and to Kewaunee via Alaska. The town of Ahnepee was already, by 1870, a bustling place with a growing economy.

Another man of growing prominence in Ahnepee was DeWayne Stebbins. He had served as an officer in the Union Navy on the Mississippi River during the Civil War and enjoyed a popularity reserved for only a few in Ahnepee. Stebbins entered the political arena shortly after he returned from the war and held offices as: postmaster, school board member, county commissioner, state assemblyman, and state senator. He also became a partner of Charles G. Boalt and Edward Decker in the shipping business out of the Ahnepee harbor. By 1866, the three of them owned all of the land and buildings at the mouth of the river where piers and docks could be constructed. They also owned the first commercial pier extending out into Lake Michigan at which every vessel was forced to dock for shipments either coming in or going out of Ahnepee. In short, they had a monopoly on all shipping and charged fees that were much higher than other ports.

An attempt to break the monopoly came in the form of a joint stock company named the Ahnepee Farmers' Pier Company. It was composed of sixty farmers and merchants whose goal was to build a competing pier. They built a pier on the south side of the harbor in 1868, but it did not take long before C. G. Boalt hired an agent who purchased the majority of stock in the company and took control of both piers. The south pier was little used after that and was finally abandoned completely after it was damaged by ice in the spring of 1876.

In the winter of 1870, Congress appropriated \$25,000.00 to construct a harbor of refuge in the Ahnepee River. In early 1871, an official report was made on a survey by the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers, of the outlet of the Ahnepee River, conducted in late 1870. The survey was done to determine if Ahnepee would be the best place for a harbor of refuge for lake vessels. The report of the engineer, George A. Zinn who conducted the survey, was not exactly what the public had been led to believe. While making the survey, it was found that limestone lay just under the bed of the river. Removing the limestone rock from the lake to the Second Street bridge, a length of 700 feet by 150 feet wide at an average depth of eight feet so there would be at least twelve feet of water at the lowest stage, was estimated to cost \$933,330.00. Adding in the cost of dredging, piling, and crib piers brought the total cost to \$1,073,330.00. The report, as published in the *Kewaunee Enterprise* on 25 March 1871, went on to say, "It will be seen at once that this plan of improving the river is impracticable on account of the large expenditure required. The question then arises, what is to be done? As before mentioned, Ahnepee is the most central point along the coast for a harbor of refuge, and some means must be devised to secure a shelter there if possible. We are then obliged to adopt some plan for an outer harbor, similar to Chicago, only much smaller and less expensive. Such a plan is therefore submitted, and is shown on the accompanying tracing in blue lines, with the estimates for the construction of the same. The bottom of the lake being mostly clay, and affording good holding ground, I think there will be no necessity of dredging before placing the cribs in position. From the shore to a depth of ten feet, a close pile pier at each end can be substituted for crib work, which will answer the purpose and be perfectly secure. However, as this plan may be hereafter changed, I herewith submit estimates for piers built entirely of crib work. The prices of materials mentioned in the estimates are the current prices paid in that locality."

The report then listed the costs of the various cribs and materials for a total of \$367,568.00. (The tracing referred to in the report is not shown here). The *Kewaunee Enterprise* published a diagram of the pier placements along with an article that explained the work being done. The north pier extended out into the lake 1,200 feet from a point just north of the mouth of the river. The entrance between the north pier and south pier was 300 feet. The south pier started from that opening, and at a right angle from the north pier, ran south for 1,500 feet and then another right angle back to the shore for 1,450 feet. More simply described, while standing on the shore, it looked like three sides of a rectangle with an opening in the left corner of the northeast side. Boalt's pier extended out into the lake from the shore, about 300 feet south of the mouth, for about 700 feet. It was not mentioned so it is safe to assume it would remain. By late 1871, work on the Ahnepee harbor was progressing rapidly with two steam pile drivers at work, and between 275 and 300 feet of the piles already driven into the lake.

On 25 January 1871, a ball was given at the Ahnepee House for the benefit of the German private school of Ahnepee. It was lauded as a very pleasant affair and netted a handsome sum for the school.

The *Kewaunee Enterprise* was the only newspaper at the time. It had been established on 22 June 1859 and was published from that date until 1 March 1865 as the *Kewaunee Enterprise*. After that, and until today, the name is spelled with an "s." It was a difficult job publishing news of the world, nation, state, and county. There were no roving reporters, except for those self-appointed individuals in each settlement who gathered the news and sent it to the paper. Surprisingly, this method worked quite well, and news of all sorts was published on a timely basis. The trick was to get people to read it, because hardly any of the immigrants or their families could speak English, much less read it. But were it not for these early newspapers, much of the colorful events of the time would be lost forever.

As an example, from the *Kewaunee Enterprise* edition of 5 July 1871 under the heading "Town and Country":

"The Kewaunee Post Office will be closed on the Fourth until 4 o'clock P.M."

"We print our paper on Monday evening this week, in order that all hands may have an opportunity of properly celebrating the Forious Glourth."[sic]

"The Racine 'Advocate,' of June 24th, puts this on the record: "How high is this?" The Kewaunee commenced to unload her cargo at half past two last Friday, and at seven o'clock in the evening the whole cargo of 170,000 feet was out of her."

"Farmers from various parts of the county tell us that winter wheat and rye never promised a more abundant harvest than now. Oats also give promise of being a good crop. Spring wheat, however, must be pronounced a failure. Many pieces will not pay for the cutting."

IMMIGRANTS. – Mr. Constant Martin informs us that another company of immigrants, some 45 or 50, came into Red River, Casco and Lincoln last week, in search of homes. The Belgian settlement has received larger accessions from the old country this season than for a number of years.

THE BIGGEST YET. – Mr. Joseph Miller again came to the fore last Friday with seventy-two feet of bark (two cords and a quarter) hauled from Pierce, at one load, with one span of horses. The day previous Capt. Cy. Wilmott hauled in sixty-eight feet. Those chaps will soon be hauling a vessel cargo at a load, if they keep on.

TALL SHINGLE SAWING. – For the week ending June 17<sup>th</sup>, Messrs. Scofield & Co., at Red River, with one Valentine and one hand machine, turned out 752¾ M. (thousand) shingles.

The *Kewaunee Enterprise* also would report and record the very unusual weather of 1871. That year would never be forgotten by those who were old enough to understand and who lived through the terrible and destructive conflagration now known as, “The Great Fire” or, “The Peshtigo Fire.” The summer of 1871 was unusually dry, in fact, drought conditions prevailed throughout the whole northeastern section of Wisconsin. In early August there were reports that fires were, “running wild in the woods.” The ground was entirely devoid of moisture for a depth of from one to two feet below the surface. It should be noted that the ground in these virgin forests was really thousands of years, layer upon layer, of leaves, bark, dead trees, and branches that decayed and had not yet turned into soil as we know it. In some low places where this decaying matter had accumulated in great depth, the pressure and humid conditions turned the matter into peat. With the drought, this forest floor was excellent tinder. How the fires started initially is not known, but many farmers were using the drought conditions to clear land they were unable to during years of normal rainfall. Many of them burned the refuse as earlier described, which could well have set the ground afire. Stories were told of farmers who dug potatoes in their clearings, which had been baked by the fire running beneath the surface.

A violent storm, so violent as to almost be called a tornado, passed over the county in mid-August and caused considerable damage. The heavy grain was flattened, corn was pulled up by the roots, roofs were torn off some buildings, and some small outhouses were overturned. Rail fences were scattered and trees were blown down in many places. In mid-September, a gale from the southeast again caused damage, only this time it was directed at vessels on the water. A grain-laden vessel went aground north of Clay Banks pier.

Then it got worse. The fire flared up on 22 September 1871 when another gale blew in from the southeast, fanned the fires, spreading them throughout the county; it continued for four days. On 8 October 1871, the fire reached its zenith. The devastation was beyond comprehension. Choking smoke filled the super-heated air, making it difficult to breathe. Fire was everywhere and there was heavy material loss; but in Kewaunee County there was, fortunately, little loss of life. In many places, the fertile topsoil, the ground previously described, was nothing but ashes – also a fertilizer. However, the gale force winds even carried that away and deposited much of it in the lake.

Wild animals escaping the fire from the depth of the woods, including panthers and bears, were reported to have been seen by citizens of the community. In the Casco area, wild bears were responsible for the loss of several pigs from local farmers.

There was another natural catastrophe on the same day, almost at the same hour, and for the same basic reasons – tinder dry wood as a result of the drought – and human carelessness. A great portion of Chicago also burned on 8 October 1871. The often-reported cause was a poorly positioned lantern being kicked over by a cow, setting off the most destructive metropolitan fire in the nation’s history.

There is no way of knowing how Johann Friedrich, Catharina Sophia, and the extended Heuer family were affected by the great fire of 1871. The accounts of the fire certainly give the impression that not one soul escaped the terror of it. Some must have thought this surely was the end of the world. We do know that everyone in the Heuer family survived. A more specific accounting of the fire is related in the story of Johann Friedrich and Catharina Sophia’s oldest daughter, Wilhelmine Caroline Rosaline.

A massive relief effort followed, with supplies coming in from Europe and various distant points in the United States. One box of clothing came from Sacramento, California and a number of others from Pennsylvania, New York, and Indiana. Some people had lost everything, especially those living in Brussels and Lincoln Township in Kewaunee County, the southwestern part of the Door County peninsula, and across the Bay of Green Bay on its eastern shores. That is where the place called Peshtigo lies, which was the scene of a terrible tragedy, also on 8 October 1871. More than 1,100 people lost their lives that day. The first person accounts of what took place there should be read to get a better understanding of how swiftly the fire consumed everything in its path. Many of them could not explain how they had escaped the fire’s wrath. They welcomed the aid provided by the government and the various relief agencies in the county and townships.

After the winter of 1871-72, the spring brought new problems. The burned and blackened trees had remained erect, held up by the frozen soil at their base, but when spring came with its heavy winds and showers, the roots gave way and the trees fell, one upon another. The farmers, woodcutters, and sawmill workers all worked feverishly to harvest what timber was salvageable. Spring also brought the buds and blossoms of wild flowers and green shoots of grass that always seem to survive. Farmers also worked the soil and planted a new crop. Life had to be sustained.

On 28 May 1872, the *Kewaunee Enterprise* published a letter from Captain A. J. Langworthy, General Agent of the Milwaukee and Green Bay Relief Committee. The letter, written from Ahnepee, describes Langworthy’s view of the situation, now some eight months after the great fire:

## THE BURNED DISTRICT.

### Condition of the People of the Devastated Region – Letter from Captain Langworthy – Another Canvass Suggested.

The Milwaukee Sentinel publishes the following letter from General Agent Langworthy, in relation to the condition of the sufferers by fire last fall:

AHNEPEE, May 11, 1872.

I. H. Kellogg, Esq., Chairman Committee of Relief, Milwaukee:

The events of the past month in the relief line do not vary much from the preceding month, except to develop the fact that fully nine-tenths of the people who we have been supplying with the necessaries of life, have had all they are entitled to, and will be able hereafter to take care of themselves. Many of this class do not relish the mandate to peremptorily cut short their rations, and are as insatiate in their demands as the importunate devotees of tobacco or whiskey. In their blind selfish view of the matter, they regard the supplies furnished as belonging to them, unjustly detained, and for which they are ready to “fight, swear, cheat or steal,” to get possession. My sympathy for this class of sufferers has gone to seed, and is beyond the pale of resurrection. Of the other tenth I would speak more kindly. Their losses have been heavy, and their grief too deep seated to spend their time in senseless clamor, they have gone heroically to work amid the blackness of desolation, and fully deserve the sustaining hand of the great charity proffered them. It has been my aim and object to give this class the full benefit of the “bread of life” placed in my hands for that purpose, and I am happy to report that they are generally well provided. Occasionally, one more modest than the rest needs seeking out and his wants supplied, to prevent suffering. In my opinion, the district should be closely canvassed again, to relieve special cases where absolutely necessary, and to relieve the distress among the aged, infirm, sick and crippled, of which there are too many to leave without assistance. Accidents of a serious nature occasionally occur to those who have no means to help themselves, and humanity requires that yet for a short time they all should be faithfully looked after. In the “burnt district” on both sides of Green Bay there are many who require medical care, many who are crippled and need support, some few, perhaps, for a long time, and it is a question whether they can be gathered together in some one ark of safety and repose more economically than to be left isolated and cared for in the localities where they now reside. I am giving this matter particular attention, and in a few days will be able to report more fully the facts. In the entire burnt district there have been twenty-five school houses burned, of which seven were in Kewaunee county, seven in Door county, eight in Oconto county, and three in Brown county. I have been in correspondence with parties in other counties, but fail thus far to add any more to the list. Under the direction of Gov. Washburn, I have gathered the necessary statistics in relation to the enumerated school houses, and they will be immediately rebuilt, the expense thereof being paid from the appropriation made by the Legislature at its last session. Gov. Washburn having signified his desire to visit the “burnt district,” I would respectfully urge upon as many members of the Milwaukee committee as can, to do like wise. To you who have taken such an active interest, sympathetically and financially, for these sorely afflicted people, it will be a source of great wonder, if not of pleasure. The power which swept over this land with such fury and destruction, in such incredible short space of time, is marvelous to behold, and its well defined track a commentary on the power of puny man to accomplish great things, and show him his utter insignificance in the presence of the Storm fiend. In the course of a few days the roads will be sufficiently settled to make the travel comparatively easy, and I hope that one and all of you will take time to visit this desolate region, now fearfully peeping forth, scantily [sic] though it be, in the rich garniture of Nature’s green toilet. In traveling over the country one can not but observe the ugly black patches on the winter wheat fields, in some places more than half burned over, where the soil was dry of a nature to consume. The fences are generally up, and being fast put up, and where they are not there is no lack of miniature specimens of humanity to look after the cattle. The slashings and windfalls are being cleared up somewhat, but where they are not will be in a better condition, when they become dry, to produce a “great fire” than they were last fall, and the only safety for the country will be to get them out of the way in some manner, which, in its impoverished condition, seems a Herculean task. Where the woods have been burned over, leaving the trees standing, their gnarled and twisted roots, where the soil has been consumed, have the appearance of families of black snakes, and as if it were a tolerably good day for snakes too. At all the mills in the country a portion of the logs are scarred and blackened, the effect of the terrible conflict they passed through, and the people everywhere look like a community of charcoal burners, so plentifully are the marks of the fire left on everything they handle. The recent rains have swollen the streams, and the logs, which were “hung up” are now on the road to a condition of usefulness, and the lumbermen begin to smile once more. Our grains have been delivered to the destitute farmers, and are generally planted, except potatoes of which there are none in this country, but much wanted. In the interior, in many places the grass begins to yield a source of life to the famished cattle, but here on the Lake Shore, where cold winds and heavy frost prevail, there are no signs of approaching spring, and overcoats and constant fires are in as much demand as in midwinter.

Respectfully submitted.

A. J. Langworthy.

Gen. Agt. Mil. & G. B. R. Com.

Langworthy's report was both heart-rending and unsympathetic. His description of the conditions the people were living in and how they were coping was vivid, yet he was optimistic that the worst was over. His letter left no doubt that he thought those who were in charge of the relief effort, including politicians, should travel to and view the devastation first hand, as that would be an inspiration to those who had suffered so horribly.

The *Kewaunee Enterprise* reported on 17 June 1872 the establishment of a newspaper in Ahnepee as follows: "The first number of the Ahnepee Record was published last Thursday. It is neatly printed and very creditably edited; especially eschews politics utterly, including Women's Rights, and devotes itself with a will to showing up the good points, of which there is no lack, of the thriving village from which it hails. The Enterprise wishes it unlimited success."

An item of historical interest in this history-making first edition was the election held in the town of Ahnepee to answer the question of incorporation. The citizens voted overwhelmingly for incorporating the town. Sixty-four voted for incorporation, twelve voted against, and two of the ballots were returned blank. It would take a year before the town of Ahnepee was officially incorporated and the name changed to village of Ahnapee.

On 27 August 1872, an article about Kewaunee County appeared in the *Kewaunee Enterprise* that had been extracted from the *Green Bay Advocate*. The writer reported what he had seen on a trip from Green Bay, through Casco, to Ahnepee as follows:

#### **Kewaunee County.**

From the *Green Bay Advocate*.

Through the politeness of Dr. Pierce, who was making a professional visit through Kewaunee county, we made a trip to Ahnepee last week. The roads in that direction are being improved each year, and the drive can readily be made in from six to seven hours. The worst places are between the site of Lamb's burned mill and Lefevre's mill, and for a few miles east of the halfway House.

Casco has a prospect of being resuscitated soon. The sawmill there is being entirely remodeled and rebuilt, and will within a month or two be ready, with new engine, boilers and machinery throughout, for service. The engine is built by Taylor & Duncan, with three boilers by O'Leary, of Fort Howard. The machinery is being put in under the supervision of Mr. Winterbottom, a practical machinist and engineer, who is one of the partners. Mr. Fay, late of Menominee, a practical lumberman, has also taken an interest there.

Preliminary to the alterations in the mill, a large amount of furniture and chair stuff had been transferred to the furniture factory, near by, which so overloaded it that it gave way, coming down, crushing out at the sides, and making a complete wreck.

The new road, from Casco to Langworthy on the lake shore, is being hurried forward for the fall business. It is now about half finished. The distance is something less than eight miles, over ground very favorable, and will prove to be an important addition to the business facilities of that county. At Langworthy, there is already a pier running into eight feet of water, which will be extended into fifteen feet. Here a store is to be established and full arrangements made for the shipment of products of the adjacent country. The new road from Casco to this place, will be the shortest one from Casco to Ahnepee – cutting off some two miles of the present distance. The business at Langworthy will be conducted by the firm of D. W. Stebbins & Co.

The country from Casco eastward to the lake shore is mainly well settled, the farms, houses, barns, fences, &c, showing the presence of an industrious and thrifty class of farmers. One of the most attractive settlements is a mile or two east of Casco, where a neighborhood of Yankee farmers are making the wilderness to "bloom and blossom as the rose." The potato bug is prevalent in many parts of the county, though its ravages are stayed to some extent by picking and by the use of paris green. The potato crop will be a full one. The class of worms which for a better name are denominated the "army worm," are making some ravages, especially in the burned regions, where they seem to have their origin. They attack the growing oats, which in spots, they completely devour. The worm appears to come out of the ground, marches northward, and when it arrives at a field of oats crawls up the stalk and completely destroys the head. We saw parts of fields near Ahnepee utterly ruined. Its ravages are limited, however, to isolated fields, and it has not yet reached anything like a serious scourge. No way has yet presented itself for arresting or destroying it.

Ahnepee continues to improve, and promised to become one of the most attractive places in the county, or indeed on the lake shore. It is now a place of about 1,000 inhabitants, with three hotels, three or four churches, many well stocked stores, an outside harbor in course of construction by the government, and is the lake port for a thickly settled and productive country. Mr. Stebbins, who is in charge of the pier business there, tells us that he has already shipped eighty-five cargoes of products this season – such as ties, posts, telegraph poles, cordwood, hemlock bark, shingles. &c. The business is constantly increasing, and with the completion of the harbor works, it must become one of the most important lake ports north of Manitowoc. It has a beautiful location, on an elevated and level plat, where the influences of the lake temper the atmosphere to a pleasant coolness in the summer, and modify the cold of the winter. The design of the new harbor operations is to inclose a commodious basin by outside piers and breakwaters – the entrance into the river being impracticable on account of the rock bed which exists at a depth ranging from 8 to 14 feet. The plan of the proposed harbor may be seen by this diagram:

[The diagram of the projected outer harbor at Ahnepee has previously been given in this paper - Ed. Enterprise.]

The depth of this basin will be from 14 to 20 feet and the anchorage good. The progress towards it at present consists of two piers, which are built out several hundred feet. They are made very substantially of crib work filled with stone, resting upon piles driven in solid lines and cut off at the water surface. The work is to be continued this season, under the recent appropriation of Congress, probably by the contractors of last year, Roberts & Johnson.

As some indication of the business of Ahnepee for a full year, Mr. Stebbins informs us that he shipped, from July 17, 1871, to July 17, 1872, 229 cargoes.

Among the improvements now going on at Ahnepee we may mention a new Catholic church nearly completed, on the north side of the river. A new Masonic hall is about to be built. Mr. Hahneman, of the Cream City House has recently enlarged his hotel by the addition of a new series of sleeping rooms, a larger dining room, &c. He keeps a model country hotel, always clean and orderly. Mr. Stransky has a large and successful brewery, which we have before described. Much attention is being paid to shade trees, the mountain ash being the favorite. It is hardy as well as elegant, and we believe is to be the popular shade tree of Northern Wisconsin, it being so well adapted to our soil and climate.

The county seat question, which is to be decided by a vote of the people at next fall's election is exciting a good deal of interest. The points to be voted for are Kewaunee and Casco.

The reopening of roads and the rebuilding of schoolhouses, destroyed by the fires of last October, are going on with energy. It will be remembered that the Legislature made an appropriation.

There are some very interesting items in this fine article. First, the writer tells us that in August of 1872, the trip to Ahnepee took six to seven hours! The halfway house he refers to, we believe, was in what is now Luxemburg, Wisconsin. And where was Langworthy – on the lakeshore – and whatever happened to it? Langworthy was a small settlement in Pierce Township that consisted of little more than a store, a couple of houses, and a pier on the flatland below the bluff, where shipments of the usual forest products and grains were shipped out by vessel and necessities brought in for the local populace. It was located about one mile south of downtown Ahnepee. The road from Casco to Langworthy, referred to in the article, was likely what is now County Highway K. That road intersected with County Road, then the name of the road to Kewaunee and now known as State Highway 42. When land transportation improved and the forests were depleted, the pier and facilities were no longer needed, so Langworthy languished into nothing more than a wide spot in the road and the name went away with it. When the author wrote about the area from Casco eastward to the lakeshore on Green Bay Road, he would have been describing what is now Rio Creek and Rankin. On the journey, he would have passed the Heuer, Bergin, Raether, and Berndt farms. He may have seen, waved to, or even talked to members of these families as he rode by. And last, but not least, the revelation that in the next year's election, the people of the county would vote on which village would become the seat of the county. It may surprise some current residents of the county to learn that Casco and Kewaunee were the choices. Kewaunee of course won.

By the end of the summer of 1872, Pastor Edward Jonas accepted the call to St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church. From his picture in the church records, Pastor Jonas appeared to be a young, baby-faced minister who was challenged to reconcile differences among his parishioners, brought on by the devastation and debt to the community resulting from the fires of the previous year.

On 25 October 1872, Johann Friedrich Heuer, the family patriarch, died in the new home that his son, Fred, had built in 1870. He lived sixty-four years, six months, and seven days. Being a member of St. Paul's congregation since it was organized, he was granted a free burial in St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church Cemetery on Wolf River Road. The cemetery was located only one-half mile west of Fred's homestead. Pastor Jonas conducted the funeral service. The family members mourned his passing and praised his wisdom for making the decision to emigrate from Prussia. Their lives were much more promising as a result, even though there had been hardship and sorrow on the way. He left six living children and thirteen living grandchildren. Two sons, his first wife, and four grandchildren died before him.

Johann Friedrich Heuer was a unique individual for his time, no more and no less than all of the people who made the decision to immigrate to a new world, a third of the way around the planet earth. His reasons for making that decision may have been simple in purpose, but it meant he was risking a great deal for himself and his family. Like all the others, he had a certain spirit of adventure and was a bit of a gambler. For all of his direct descendants, his decision to emigrate made our lives more satisfying and free. Some would say we need to reflect on that more and appreciate how much our ancestors sacrificed to make our lives better. Johann Friedrich worked very hard all of his life. In his final days, he must have felt a sense of accomplishment and satisfaction that his family was now well established and prospering in America.

Augusta, Johann Friedrich and Catharina Sophia's youngest daughter and child, had begun working in Ahnepee although she still lived on Fred and Anna Rosina's farm north of the town. She was employed at the Wisconsin House Hotel, owned by W. Boedecker. She was being courted by a young farmer from Rankin whom she had known since childhood. His name was Herman Raether. Augusta and Herman were married in St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church on 6 May 1873 by the Reverend Edward Jonas. After their marriage, Augusta and Herman lived with Herman's parents, Martin and Engel Raether, on their farm located only one-half mile to the east from where Augusta had grown up. She now lived near the farm of Peter and Wilhelmine Bergin, her oldest sister, and their children. Her brother Ferdinand, his wife Caroline, and their children



were in the process of moving to Caroline's parents farm, which they had just purchased. That farm was about one-half mile to the southeast of the Raether farm. Ferdinand and Caroline sold the original Heuer homestead to John Kumbera on 14 July 1873.

Peter Bergin had been in ill health for over a year, and by the summer of 1873, he was so sick he could no longer leave his bed. Peter died on 16 September 1873 after a long fight with tuberculosis. He was buried in St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Cemetery on the hill in Rankin. Peter had lived sixty-two years, nine months, and twenty-five days at the time of his death. He had been a founding member of that church and assisted in the construction of the first building used as a church, near the site of his grave. Peter had been a true pioneer, very much like Johann Friedrich Heuer. In fact, they were like brothers, nearly the same age, and more than likely made the decision to emigrate jointly. Peter had greatly assisted the Heuer family during the process of emigration by going ahead as the scout, to reconnoiter the route and make the journey more secure. His passing left only Catharina Sophia of that generation remaining.

In July 1873, the incorporation of the town of Ahnepee had been completed and approved. In the transaction, the name Ahnepee was changed to Ahnapee, and town was changed to village. The new name was now the village of Ahnapee. M. T. Parker of the *Ahnapee Record* had this to say about the name change on 4 September 1873: "The word is not pronounced by the Indians as it commonly is by the whites in this vicinity. The former pronounces it as though it was spelled Ahunypee while the latter pronounce it as though spelled Annapee, the Indians give full accent to the last syllable and the whites accent it but partially. As for the governments being authority for the correct spelling of the word, I think they are not and presume that not one of the authorities ever endeavored to ascertain the correct spelling or definition of it. I think that the cause of the name being spelled with an "a" was occasioned by the word having been misspelled by the parties sending them the papers. I believe that the word should be spelled as heretofore." Parker obviously wrote this with tongue in cheek, poking fun at those who caused it to be changed. He, for one, wanted it to remain as it had been – Ahnepee – but it had been changed by the documents of incorporation, for whatever reason, and that was final. Sign painters were in great demand until all traces of Ahnepee were erased.

The Kewaunee County Agricultural Society had been formed on 28 December 1872 and held its first county fair in October 1873. The premium lists were printed in English, German, and Bohemian. It is hard to believe they did not also print them in French or Walloon, as there was a huge settlement of Belgians in the county by then who spoke that language.

Augusta and Herman Raether had decided to purchase a farm for themselves rather than take over his father's farm in Rankin. On 1 September 1874, they bought eighty acres in Pierce Township located about one-half mile southeast of Krohn's lake, south of the village of Ahnapee. After they had moved and settled into their home, Catharina Sophia, Augusta's mother and family matriarch who had been living on Fred's farm north of Ahnapee, moved her belongings to the Raether farm. It is believed she moved there in the fall of 1875 so she could be cared for by her daughter instead of a daughter-in-law.

The years passed in calm and prosperity for the extended Heuer family. There were more children born and some did not survive. The Heuer men, Ferdinand and Fred, increased their land holdings, built new homes, barns, and granaries. Wilhelmine Bergin remarried only a month after Peter died. She married Heinrich Brandt on 21 October 1873. Together they would continue to farm the Bergin homestead. Ernestine and Henry Gericke were operating their general merchandise store on the north side of Ahnapee and were prospering. Bertha and Charles Zastrow were farming north of Forestville. Augusta and Herman Raether were doing well on their farm in Pierce Township.

The village of Ahnapee became the city of Ahnapee on 28 February 1879. The community had grown beyond all expectations as reflected in an article titled, "Ahnapee – Its Growth and Future Prosperity," that appeared in the 25 September 1879 issue of the *Ahnapee Record*:

Few of the small number of travelers who passed through the northeastern part of this state twenty years ago imagined that today a thriving young city, numbering about 1,500 inhabitants, would be located at this point, upon the banks of Lake Michigan.

Even the hopeful strong men who first settled here and, with courage worthy of admiration, built for themselves houses in the wilderness, did not anticipate that so soon their lands would be divided into city lots and that where their log cabins then stood fine brick buildings would now be erected.

If the past history of Ahnapee is a criterion from which its future may be foretold, no city in the state has more flattering prospects of becoming a prosperous business place.

If the growth of Ahnapee has not been as rapid as that of some other cities, it has been more sure and with as good prospects of increasing its trade, commerce, and industrial interests.

Since its first settlement it has been blessed with an industrious, self-reliant and public spirited class of citizens, to whom it is indebted for its present prosperity.

A majority of the business men of the city first started in business with small capitals, and for many years labored hard and diligently to maintain their credit.

Money was scarce and business was carried on almost entirely on the credit system. Ties, posts, wood and bark were the chief articles of trade, grain having been added to the list of exports only within the past few years.

Many men who started in business here a few years ago with only a few hundred dollars capital now own large commercial establishments and carry heavy stocks of goods or have large interests in real estate.

The manufacturing interests of the place, only, remain neglected, but with good prospects of future development.

The former credit system of trade is now fast being done away with, and the cash system adopted. This change has tended to place the business of the city upon a firmer basis and lend new life and activity to all branches of trade.

The thick forests have been cleared away and large, well tilled farms, with good buildings, now surround the city.

The shipping facilities are yearly being increased, and there is a noteworthy advancement in the amount of imports of goods and exports of produce.

As trade and capital have increased, the rate of taxation, contrary to the experience of many towns and cities, has decreased.

The finances of the city government have been judiciously expended in a manner which would prove the most benefit to the greatest number and generally advance and protect the interest of the city.

Ahnapee has experienced a prosperous past and the prospects for its future are flattering.

Business men with capital, seeking a place where they can invest their money advantageously, will do well to visit Ahnapee before locating elsewhere. They will here find room to engage in almost any branch of trade or manufacture.

This city offers inducements to live business men that are unexcelled by any city of its size in the state.

The city and the county *were* growing and prospering as were most of the immigrant settlers throughout the area. The interior of the state, however, remained a forest wilderness for many years, and the rivers were the main highways for commerce. The fur trade continued and slowly, small villages sprang up along the rivers. Soon forest roads began to spread in a network within the state. Wisconsin, by the end of the nineteenth century, was the leading lumber state, and the railroads were extended to move the lumber to market. In Kewaunee County, farmers had turned to dairy cows as their major source of income after a number of years when the wheat crops produced meager profits.

There was yet another change to the name of the city. City Ordinance Number nineteen, passed on 7 June 1897, and changed the name Ahnapee to Algoma. Before it was officially changed, there had been considerable discussion on the subject. The 25 June 1896 edition of the *Ahnapee Record* contained two articles about the meaning of the old and new proposed name as follows:

#### **A New Name.**

"Ahnapee," meaning in the Indian language, "Wolf River," will soon be an abandoned word and the melodious Indian name, "Algoma" will take its place. A petition has been in circulation here this week praying that the postmaster-general at Washington, D.C., grant the substitution of the word "Algoma" for that of Ahnapee, the present name of this postoffice. Everybody was eager to sign the petition.

"Algoma," to Indian talk, means "Rosy Hill." That is what Smoke-in-the-Face and others used to call the hill at the lake shore here, as it used to be covered with wild roses. It is not hard to forget anything we never did like, when we have something prettier to think of, and we will try to let "Ahnapee" vanish from our memory as it will from our life.

The definition of the name Algoma in the above article came from a Native American and should have been good enough. However, over the years even that changed. Mrs. Pearl Foshion wrote a book titled, "History of Algoma" and on page eight said: "1897 – The name of 'City of Ahnapee' was changed to Algoma, which is an Indian word meaning Park of Flowers!" This definition – Park of Flowers – could conceivably have over years become the perceived translation of the Rosy Hill Indian translation of Algoma, mentioned in the copy of the article reproduced above.

When the announcement of the new name was finally made in the 22 July 1897 edition of the *Algoma Record*, the headline said, "Editor Rejoices; 'Ahnapee' Becomes City of 'Algoma'!" Inside was this article on the change:

#### **Welcome Algoma.**

Years ago, a settlement was made on the shore of Lake Michigan at this point, and the name of Wolf River was given to the trading station. The name was eventually changed to the Indian word, Ah-Ne'-pee, the original name of the river. But, of late years, the word has been incorrectly pronounced Ah'na-pee, with short a.

Considerable fault has been found with the name by citizens here, and it has been made the subject of jest, more or less, by transient people, till a few months ago, steps were taken toward changing it for a name more acceptable. Hon. M. T. Parker, assemblyman from this district, succeeded in passing a bill through the last legislature permitting cities of our class to change their name; then a petition signed by nearly every voter in the city was presented to the city council praying that the name of the city be changed for Algoma. The petition was accepted by an unanimous vote of the council, and in due time an ordinance was passed, changing the name of Ahnapee for Algoma. Said ordinance was published last week and is therefore in effect at the present time.

Every citizen should be pleased with the change, for there is no other name in the state prettier than Algoma. Then, too, there is another great advantage; our thriving city is blessed with a fine climate in summer and it is situated on one of the prettiest crescent shaped beaches to be found on Lake Michigan. In short, Algoma affords the tourist every comfort to be found at a summer resort, but the name "Ahnapee" was against us, and the pleasure seekers did not come. It is safe to say that with a littler energy on the part of the public, Algoma will receive her share of the tourists in the future, and thereby prosper even faster than she has prospered under her old name. In a future issue it is our intention to trace the growth and prosperity of our little city from the time of its infancy to the present time, thereby stimulating the pride of every true citizen; and for the present we would say, "Welcome, Algoma, and may your prosperity be great."

It is possible that if the early settlers had pronounced the name Ahnepee correctly, as the Indians did (Ah-ne'-pee), there would never have been a name change from the beginning. The effective date of the change was 7 September 1897. The name Algoma has already endured for over 100 years so it is not likely to be changed again.

Catharina Sophia Heuer, who had resided in the Kewaunee County area since 1860, died at the home of her daughter, Augusta Heuer Raether, in Pierce Township on a Friday, 24 March 1899. Her obituary, published in the *Algoma Record* on 31 March 1899, recognized her as one of the earliest pioneer settlers:

#### **NINETY-ONE YEARS OLD.**

##### **Mrs. Sophia Heuer Dies at the Home of Her Daughter.**

Mrs. Sophia Heuer, who had resided in this county since 1860, died at the home of her daughter, Mrs. Herman Reather [sic], in Pierce town on Friday, March 24, at the age of 91 years, lacking one day, cause of death being old age.

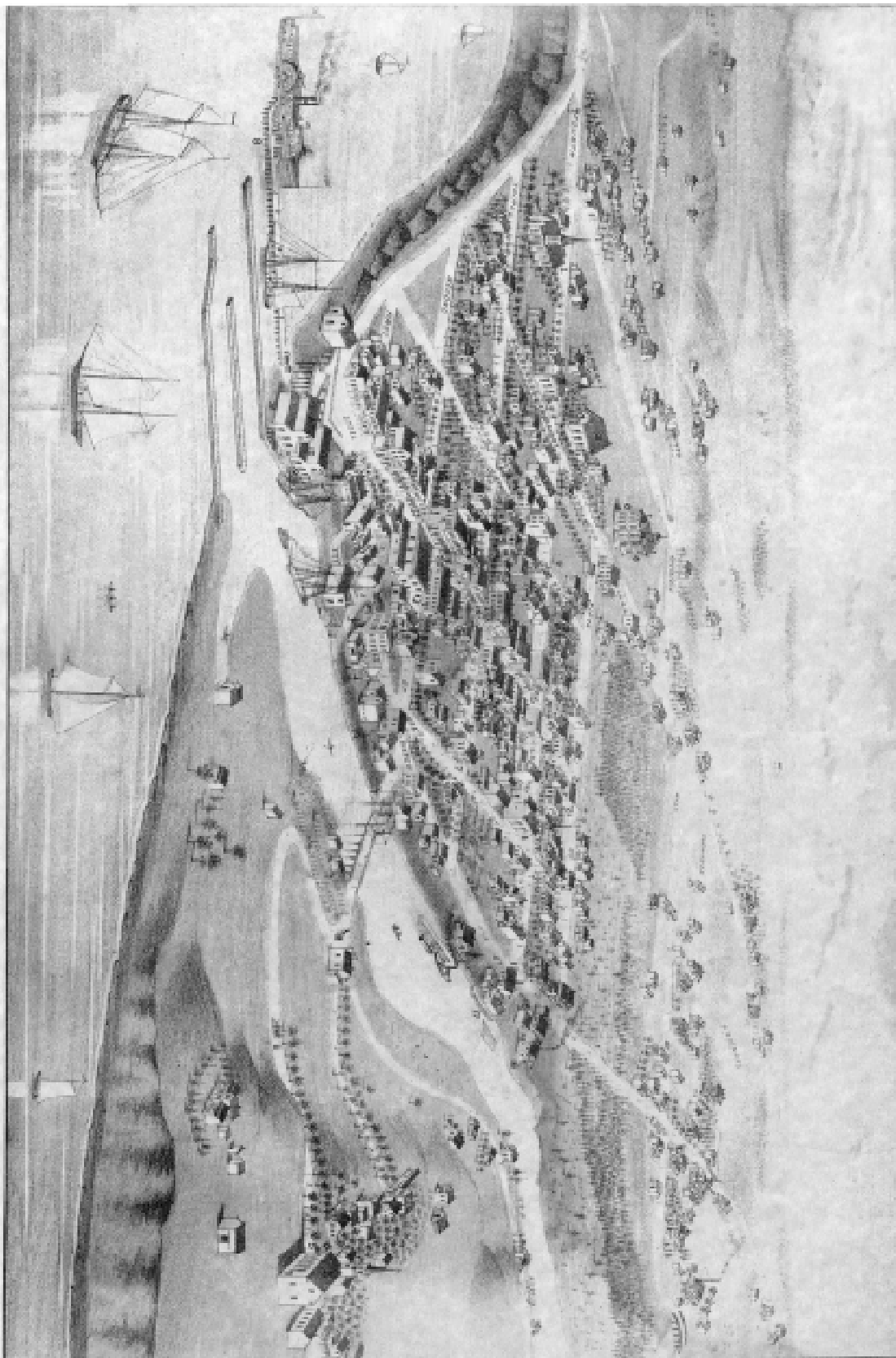
Mrs. Sophia Heuer was born in Zitzmar, Germany, on the 25th day of March, 1808. She was married to Fred Heuer in 1831 and they came to this country in '57, going to Cedarburg, this state, where they resided until 1860, when they came to this county. In 1872 Mr. Heuer died, since which time Mrs. Heuer has made her home with her daughter, Mrs. Reather. Of seven children, six are living to mourn the loss of their mother, one of the boys having been killed in the Civil war; they being Mrs. Henry Gericke, Fred and Ferdinand Heuer of this city, Mrs. Wm. Brandt and Mrs. Herman Reather of Pierce town, and Mrs. Chas. Zastrow of Faunuse, Mich.

The funeral was held from the Lutheran church on Tuesday, Rev. F. J. Eppling officiating.

The obituary contained a number of inaccuracies. We believe Catharina Sophia was born in Gross Zapplin, Prussia, not Zitzmar, based on the historical records gathered. She married Johann Friedrich on 6 October 1832. As stated earlier, Catharina Sophia moved to the home of their daughter, Augusta Raether, in late 1875, not 1872. Augusta did not marry Herman Raether until 6 May 1873, and they purchased their homestead farm in Pierce Township on 1 September 1874. Her son, August, was not killed in the Civil War, but died of typhoid fever on 22 May 1865 in Alexandria, Virginia. Her daughter, Wilhelmine, here referred to as Mrs. Wm. Brandt, had been married to Heinrich Brandt before he died of a farm injury on 7 October 1895. Her daughter, Bertha, and her husband, Charles Zastrow, were living in Faunus, Upper Michigan, not Faunuse. Bertha and Charles had moved to the upper peninsula of Michigan to operate a sawmill but would return to Forestville after a sojourn of six years.

Catharina Sophia Ruhnke Heuer was laid to rest beside her husband, Johann Friedrich Heuer, in St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Cemetery on Wolf River Road. Catharina Sophia was, indeed, a hardy woman as evidenced by her achieving the age of ninety-one under conditions that were harsh and unforgiving. She was a pillar of strength to her family and certainly had some influence in the decision to emigrate. Although she and Johann Friedrich did not have the time or the advantage of youth that their children had, they managed to acquire property and establish their children in America. That had been their only mission and their lives confirm it. Once their children had property of their own, Catharina Sophia and Johann Friedrich were content to live out the rest of their lives in the care of their children. As they were the true pioneers, the ones who made the decision to come here, it is fitting that we remember them often, and thank the Lord for guiding them in that decision. We who are their descendants should never forget that it was Johann Friedrich and Catharina Sophia who enabled us to be here, for better or for worse.

To close this chapter, we leave their descendants with these thoughts about their pioneer ancestors. When there was uncertainty and political turmoil, they moved where opportunity beckoned, and whether in the eighteenth or in the nineteenth century, broke and reestablished personal and familial ties as events required it of them. These common and very ordinary people were linked together in one great aspiration – survival. What is most fascinating is that the quality of endurance and the instinct for survival that we normally identify with the American pioneer – the quality and instinct that made America great – was instilled in the Heuers and related families long before they emigrated to America. Our Heuer ancestors teach us that as Americans, we should recognize the gift that Europe gave us in those people that emigrated, and we should understand that Europe bequeathed to us that which made those natives great. Above all else, our ancestors show us that we are truly sons and daughters of the Old World.



- Geographical features**
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**AHNAPPEEWIS,**  
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 HOME OF BERNAL W. DAVID BILLOTT, JR. 111 2nd Street, Wisconsin County, 1437 Highway One, Wausau, Wisconsin  
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