

## THE COUNTRY BOYS CORNET BAND

This band was started by a group of young men who lived in the vicinity of the Ruth farm. No one party in particular was instrumental in getting it started and its stimulus was no doubt created by a number of them discussing the age old problem of what to do in the way of spending their leisure time. Since all of them were from highly respected families and brought up under strict discipline, they gave no thought to anything other than of constructive action. A number of them being musically inclined they decided to use this talent to supply their recreation and organized the country boys cornet band.

The group took lessons from a Mr. Schneberle who lived in Mascoutah, Illinois. They organized in 1900 and disbanded in 1907 through losing too many of the members who moved out of the community.

Their first public engagement, a bit strange because most of its members were staunch Republicans, was playing at a Democratic Rally held in New Baden, Illinois. They greatly enhanced the social life of the community by giving their time to playing at the numerous school picnics and on wedding and birthday anniversaries of members and nonmembers who lived in the surrounding community.

The writer well remembers their practice sessions held at the homes of the members and their method of surprising a family at their home. This was usually done at night. All those who were to participate in the affair would meet at a predetermined time at the home of one of the band members closest to the one being surprised, form a procession led by the band, march in silence to within a short distance of that home and then start playing. This brought the family out of their home to investigate and you can imagine the hilarity created by such an occurrence. There was always a lunch of cake and coffee or a regale feast, depending entirely upon the nature of the occasion.

Through the foresight of Mr. George Dagit, one of the members, we are able to give the complete roster of the band and the name of the instrument each one played. While the name they chose suggests that this band was made up entirely of young men, some of them were fathers. One was a father and son combination, namely, Jacob H. Ruth and Walter S. Ruth were father and son respectively. The Ruths, Gustav and Robert, were brothers and in turn, cousins to Jacob H. Ruth.

The relationship of the Ruths in the band and the compiler is: Jacob H. Ruth, father; Walter S. Ruth, brother; Gustav and Robert Ruth; first cousins once removed and John Dagit an uncle by marriage on the maternal side. All these relationships were extant at the time the band was in existence, with the one exception of John Dagit, who did not become my uncle until some time after the group disbanded.

Name	Instrument
Andrew Brede	B flat Cornet
George Dagit	B flat Cornet
John Dagit	Snare Drums, Bass Drum and traps
Charley Frey	Trombone
German Frey	Bass Drum
William Frey	E flat Cornet
Louis Leutinger	Slide Trombone
John Mallrich	Tuba
Oscar Mallrich	Baritone
Philip Meyer	B flat Tenor
William Meyer	E flat Alto
Philip Pister	B flat Cornet
Fred Quitmeyer	B flat Cornet
Gustav Ruth	E flat Bass
Jacob H. Ruth	B flat Clarinet
Robert Ruth	E flat Alto
Walter S. Ruth	E flat Alto
Harry Schaffer	Bass Drum

May 1, 1955.

By Albert J. Ruth.



## THE STORY OF "CASTLE GARDEN"

While doing research work on the "Ruth" family in connection with trying to establish their ancestral origin and inborn traits, the writer has frequently found some references made to "Castle Garden."

Since there may be others, who, after reading the histories in which it appears, wonder just what sort of a place "Castle Garden" was, we have made search and inquiry and found the following information.

In the 1936 edition of the Encyclopedia Americana we find: Castle Garden, the former immigrant depot in New York City, at the point of Manhattan Island, in Battery Park. In the early days of the City the place was a small fortified Island a few feet from the mainland; later it became a public hall for concerts and assemblies. Here Jenny Lind made her famed American debut. Many years ago this Island was incorporated with the general area of the Battery by filling the intervening space with earth and rock; new buildings were erected and the place was devoted to the purpose of landing the steerage immigrants. In 1890 it ceased to be used as an immigrant depot and was turned over to the Park Commissioner of the City of New York. The old Fort is now being used as a public aquarium.

Additional information on "Castle Garden" appears in two publications of the American Guide Series of the Works Progress Administration, entitled New York Panorama and New York City Guide. The New York Panorama states that Castle Garden had been ceded to New York City by the United States in 1823. The New York City Guide states that it had been built by the Federal Government about 1808 and that at first it had been known as the West Battery; that it had been re-named Castle Clinton after the war of 1812; that in the year of 1855, Castle Garden became the Country's chief immigrant station; that from the year 1855 to

1890 a total of 7,690,606 aliens entered the United States through the Castle Garden Station; that the use of Castle Garden as Immigration Center was under New York State control; that in the year of 1890 the reception and care of immigrants was transferred to Ellis Island and operated under the control of the Federal Government and that six years later, Castle Garden was re-opened as the Aquarium of the City of New York.

Castle Garden, or Castle Clinton, as it was later named was made a National Shrine or Monument. It was authorized by an act of Congress in 1946 and became effective upon approval of U. S. Attorney General of the Federal Government.

This concluded eight years of effort on the part of educational, civic and government groups to save the structure from destruction in a proposed subway construction project. It was erected in the year of 1808 as a fortification of the New York Harbor and had been military headquarters in the war of 1812.

The Castle Clinton site and the nearby Statue of Liberty National Monument are to be consolidated and become a single unit under the administration of the National Park Service.

The writer has been in New York on many occasions and visited Battery Park and the Aquarium in the old fort and is well acquainted with all the surrounding area. Another visit in 1952 showed numerous changes. The elevated lines were razed to make room for a new project. The old Fort was about half demolished and one could clearly see the construction of the walls, three feet thick in places, the positions of the gun emplacements, ramparts, parapets, magazines and the many tunnels connecting the various rooms in the old Fort. This construction could not be visualized when viewing the building from the outside.

The project of making this a National Shrine has not been completed at this writing.

March 12, 1954.

By Albert J. Ruth.



BARBARA STROHM'S LETTER

TO HER

RELATIVES IN GERMANY

While working in conjunction with Dr. Fritz Braun of Heimatstelle Pfalz on genealogical research work on the early ancestors of the Strohm Family, we were most fortunate to find some interesting data, among which there was a letter written by Barbara Strohm, Nee Schowalter, to her relatives in Germany. It was through Dr. Braun that we were able to get a copy of the letter which describes some of the highlights of the ocean voyage from Le Harve to New York and part of the trip from New York to Iowa. It was written in the German language and was translated as literally as possible to preserve its original composition or thought, rather than to obtain a grammatical masterpiece in English.

Barbara Strohm, Nee Schowalter, was a daughter of Jacob Schowalter and Elizabeth Kaegy. Peter Strohm, whom she married, was a son of Johannes Strohm and Barbara Lehmann of Heppenheim. Barbara and Katherine Strohm, who married two brothers, Jacob and Reverend David Ruth in the order given, were sisters of Peter Strohm. A history written by Reverend David Ruth and Katherine Ruth, Nee Strohm, and one by Barbara Ruth, Nee Strohm, are found elsewhere in the genealogy.

Since the family connections and relationships of the Ruth and Strohm family become quite numerous and for that matter, quite complicated, we only give the necessary relationship at this point to identify the Barbara Strohm, Nee Schowalter, who wrote the letter which follows this note of explanation. We are sure that you will concur with our decision after looking over these family ties we mention above.

March 16, 1957.

By Albert J. Ruth.

The following is a copy of the letter written in Cleveland, Ohio by Barbara Strohm, Nee Schowalter, to her relatives in the Rhein Pfalz. She was born in Weierhof on March 14, 1823 and married Peter Strohm. The couple and their five daughters came to America on the ship "Mercury" in 1853, landing at the Port of New York and travelled west from here to Franklin in Lee County, Iowa to make their new home.

COPIED FROM THE ORIGINAL

Cleveland, June 9, 1853.

(The letter arrived on 7-11-1853)

Dear brother, brother-in-law and sisters-in-law;

May the bounteous grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the many blessings of the Holy Trinity, be with us all from time into eternity, Amen.

Now my dear loved ones, from Leisy's and Risser's letters you have learned how our voyage came to pass from the time we started until we came to Le Harve.

Here our misery began. Early in the evening Elise complained of being ill, she began to vomit and also developed a very high fever. We sent for the Doctor the first thing in the morning but he did not come until close to noon because he had already left his office to make his out of office calls before he got our message. Madam Bauer would not recommend another Doctor. Madam said, "This one is the foremost in the city". When the Doctor looked at Elise, he shook his head, he could not understand or speak German. Madam Bauer understood German and interpreted for us. She did everything possible for the welfare of Elise and insisted on doing all of the work herself. I was not to exert myself. She gave Elise an emetic followed by hot saltwater packs on her head. She had to drink raspberry juice followed by seltzer water. This was followed by some powder that was to have stopped the vomiting after an hour or so but it did not relieve

the condition and she continued to vomit and nothing came up but bile. She was so ill that neither juice or water would stay in her stomach, it would come up as soon as she had swallowed it.

We told the Doctor to come back on the following morning. He came and found Elise somewhat better. He prescribed another emetic and a mustard plaster for her stomach and the continued application of the hot saltwater packs on her head. The Doctor's two visits and the drugs cost us eleven Francs.

Now, my beloved ones, you can readily picture in your mind, just what sort of a mood I was in, having had a very sick child on our hands at the time when we were supposed to board ship. We were supposed to board ship on the twenty eighth and we actually went on board that day. Elise's being ill affected me so much that I took sick at Le Harve before we had even gone aboard ship. We boarded ship and were on it for less than a one half hour, it was still a long time before the ship was to sail, when I was taken so ill that I had to give in and lie down. It was about two o'clock in the afternoon when the ship set sail and by evening quite a few of the passengers had already become ill from seasickness.

My husband, Barbara and Anna suffered very little from seasickness, Katherine and Marie became ill but made a quick recovery and had no more trouble after having a severe attack of vomiting. To make matters much worse, Elise got the seasickness along with her other illness and was a very sick girl for eight or ten days, after which time she got better, thank the Lord. I was ill for the entire time that we were on the ship. The first fourteen days I was so weak that it took two grown people to support me to take me up to the quarter deck where I would remain for most of the day and while it was not the most pleasant place to be, one could at least breathe some fresh air. On the last fourteen days I got brain fever, having had it on two previous occasions, I knew it's symptoms.

The pains in my head were so terrible that they were impossible for me to describe. They usually began in the morning about six o'clock and kept getting worse and worse until about one o'clock when they would be so bad that I could hardly stand them and then they would gradually let up so that by evening they would almost be gone. The pains would get worse and worse each day for six or seven days when they would reach a point where I thought I would not be able to stand them and I could not even bear touching my head with my hands, then they would be less severe each day so that by the next six or seven days they would all be gone and I would be allright again.

Now I want to tell you what my meals were as long as I was on the ship. On the eighth day David Risser brought me a little wine soup, it was the first food that I was able to eat since I came aboard the ship. I was always thirsty but had no appetite. The most I could eat at any one time was from five to six soup spoonfuls of soup and a little cheese bread. Risser's gave me some black bread that proved to be the most agreeable for me. There was a family close to us who were bakers that brought a lot of it along with them and helped us out by sharing it with us. They still had a lot of it left when we reached New York and it was not the least bit mouldy. I did not dare eat any toast and I could not stand the sight of meat, etc..

Now I want to tell you something about our family life while at sea. We and the Vogt family lived together and did all of our housekeeping chores as one family. The three menfolk, Vogt, Dettweiler Nikolaus and the Vogt girls took over and attended to the job of cooking, a difficult job at which they all worked heartily and willingly. The kitchen on the ship was the one place that created the most hardships on the entire trip. It was altogether too small for so many people. There was no regular fireplace equipped with a chimney to carry away the fumes that were often so obnoxious that they almost suffocated the person who

happened to be doing the cooking. Some of the people caused a lot of quarreling on account of the crowded conditions of the kitchen but luckily most of it was insignificant and was always quickly settled.

We were well satisfied with the officers and crew of the ship. The Captain, two pilots and the steward were very orderly after they became acquainted with the passengers. We were also well satisfied with the sailors, they were all very polite and none of them were rude or impolite to any of us.

I heard that there were a total of 535 passengers on board the ship. During this entire trip there was only one death, a woman 89 years of age. There were no births on the ship during this voyage. Outside of seasickness there was no serious illness of any sort on board the ship on this trip.

When-ever anyone became ill-behaved or rude, the Captain would take them to the quarter deck and have him lashed to the mast until he promised to behave. This, how-ever, occurred only twice during our entire voyage across the ocean.

We did not have any bad storms during this trip. The crew of the ship and a number of the passengers who had made the trip a number of times, incidently, we had a family from Saarbrucken who were making the trip for the third time, could tell us stories about storms on the sea. We were all grateful to the Lord for holding these storms at a distance and for keeping us safe from harm during this trip. We owe many thanks to God for his watchful care and protection.

On two occasions, we encountered some very strong winds, once when accompanied by a thunder-storm that passed over in a few hours after which all was calm, the other struck us at midnight. These two occasions were storms enough for us. The chests that had been lashed to the decks broke loose and slithered across the ship as easily as if they had not been lashed to the decks in the first place. Huge waves struck the ship and washed over the top of the decks, engulfing

it to such an extent that the entire ship shuddered. During the storm many such waves struck the ship and gave everybody many a scare. The top section of the main mast, about ten or twelve feet in length, broke off and fell to the deck with a thunderous crash and everything landed on the deck in a heap. This damage was repaired in a short time and the trip continued.

Several days later we encountered a heavy fog and all of a sudden we heard a loud pealing of bells and it almost started a panic among the passengers. Some of those in between decks had already shouted "Fire; Fire". There was no danger of a fire. The pealing of the bells was a safety measure to warn any ship that was sailing close by of their presence so they could be on the lookout to prevent their ramming into one another in the heavy fog.

On a long and strenuous voyage under such trying circumstances as this one a person meets up with all sorts of trials and experiences. On an ocean voyage such as this, one gets many an opportunity to pray and learn to know God. Especially when one does not place his whole-hearted faith in him. God will most certainly not forsake us if we do not forsake him.

My loved ones, you can readily understand how one person among so many can learn so much about the far reaching power of God and how he rules. I often have wondered how it was possible for God to carry out so many things simultaneously. For example; While I was praying he heard my plea and at the same time he was listening to the prayers of others. There you have a good example of the infinite power of God.

On Whitsunday we had church services on our ship. A certain Madam Sauerschuhl of Karlsruhe who was in our group took charge of the necessary preparations. She had all of the chairs taken from the first class cabins and had them all placed on the top deck where only the first class passengers were allowed. We did not have this privelege granted to us. The services began by singing a few verses of an appropriate song.

Then my husband read a Whitsunday prayer out of our Memory Chest (the old style german books that had a clasp on each cover to keep the book closed) prayer-book, then one or two more songs were sung. Then one of the others preached a fitting sermon.

The weather on this trip was mostly cold, in fact it was so cold that one could hardly stand to be out on the top deck. The only warm weather we had was on the two days before Whitsunday.

Our Steward who had been making these trips for a period of five years, told us that he had never been on a trip that had so little quarreling and fighting and so few storms as this one had.

We were well satisfied with our ocean voyage, for which we are grateful to God and so with his help we arrived at Port of New York at 10:00 A.M. on May the thirtieth, 1853, after thirty two days on the ocean. It was only thirty two days, but the anxiety and the yearning about it's outcome made it seem longer. The nervous tension and mental strain we went through on this trip is something that I cannot put into words.

In New York City we stopped and made arrangements to go to Cleveland, Ohio. The cost of transportation for this trip amounted to \$4.75 per person and \$1.75 extra for the excess baggage. We left New York City on the first of June, travelling by train to Buffalo which took three nights. On the fourth night we went from the city of Buffalo to Cleveland by steamboat, arriving safe and sound on Sunday the fifth of June.

My brother Daniel was not at home when we arrived because he had left on Friday to go to Buffalo on a business trip and while he was there he visited with the Pfrimmerhofers so he did not get back home until Tuesday. We planned to leave Cleveland on Friday the tenth of June to continue our journey to Iowa but we had to change our plans because of a stroke of fate.

On Thursday our daughter Anna was taken seriously ill. She developed a very high fever along with head and stomach pains and nausea from which there seemed

to be no relief so that today, Sunday, we still have no idea of how things will turn out. Jacob Leisy, my brother-in-law, is treating Anna. He is a practicing physician here in Cleveland. My brother is financing him until he gets established. Just now he does not know just what sort of a disease our Anna has.

Quite a few of our friends and acquaintances live here but I have not been anywhere except to Leisy's, where I was very well pleased. If they can sell at a good price, they will also go to the State of Iowa. Several weeks ago their daughter Anna was married to a brave young man who came here from Prussia who has already been to Iowa where he was very well pleased. My brother and his family are also thinking of going to Iowa in the near future. Up to now I am very well pleased here in America, particularly with the many beautiful frame houses. One does not have to build a house of stone or brick in this Country.

We also had a german physician on board our ship. He treated Elise and I during our voyage across the ocean. We were also very well pleased while visiting our brother and his family. They have three healthy, lovely daughters. We regret to continue our journey without them, but they will soon follow.

Give my regards to the Weierhofers and all of our friends, I can not mention all of them. Also give my regards to all of those who inquire about us.

Today, on the thirteenth of June at seven o'clock we leave Cleveland by steamboat to continue our trip to Iowa. Our daughter Anna is somewhat better again, we hope that her condition continues to improve. We pray that the good Lord will soon banish her illness and bring her safely back to her good health again.

So, Farewell and with kindest regards from all of us, most especially from me.

Your sister, Barbara Strohm.

The original of this letter is in the hands of Adolf Hertzler, Gundheimerhof, Germany.





A HISTORY  
OF  
THE VALENTINE KREHBIEL FAMILY

1843--1902

A short biography and family statistics for the children of Valentine Krehbiel and Susanna Ruth.

1862

I, Valentine Krehbiel, am the fifth son of John and Kathryn Krehbiel and was born March 19, 1843. In all I had 11 brothers and sisters, six brothers and five sisters. One brother and one sister died early in childhood. The sister, the third child of my parents, I never did know. Her name was Elizabeth. The brother, who was born after me, I well remember. We were playmates while the older children were attending school. His name was Peter and he drowned in a pond. The names of the other children according to their ages were; Jacob, Christian, Kathryn, Daniel, Maria, Barbara, John, Valentine, Susanna and Peter.

Both of my parents were born in Weierhof, Landkommiseriat Kirchenheim-bolenden, in Rheinpfalz Koenigreich Baiern, in which place they resided until

1844. My father was born on February 2, 1802 and was a son of Jacob Krehbiel and Elizabeth Kaegy. Mother was born in May 1805 and was a daughter of Christian Krehbiel and Kathryn Krehbiel. My parents married in 1828. In 1844 my parents left their birthplace and moved to Ober Baiern and bought a piece of land at Kleinschwabenhausen, Gemeinde Einhofen, Land Gericht Dachau, Kirchliche Gemeinde, Eichstock.

In 1851, my older brothers one after another were nearing military age and my brother Jacob had to be registered, father paid in for a substitute to take his place and decided to go to America, the Land of religious freedom where he, together with his family might serve God according to his convictions and in accordance with the fundamentals of the Mennonite Church. This decision was carried out in that same year. The property at Kleinschwabenhausen was sold and we returned to Weierhof which was my birthplace, also the birthplace of the older children and both my parents. After ten weeks we said farewell to the land of our birth and began the voyage to America.

On the steamship Segelschiff (Sailship), also by rail, we were brought under God's guidance and protection to our destination, which after a six months stay in Ashland County Ohio, was in Lee County Iowa. Here a farm was purchased which remained the family home until 1859, when on the twentieth of December, 1859, father died, this broke up the home.

By this time the size of the family had decreased somewhat through marriage of several of the older children. The two oldest brothers moved to Summerfield, Saint Clair County, Illinois. My mother and I went too.

As Kleinschwabenhausen was the place of my childhood so then, Lee County was the place of my youth. Although as I was on the threshold of young manhood when we made this move, a very special incident was connected with it which completely changed the circumstances of my life. The Lord led to an intimate

meeting of my lifemate of whom my next chapter shall be written.

Part No. 2

Susanna Ruth, born March 21, 1842, at Harreszell, Gemeinde Bettenbach, Landgericht Dachau, Kingdom of Bavaria, Church, Eichstock. She was the daughter of Jacob Ruth, born in Harxheim Rheinpfalz, in 1809 and Barbara Strohm, born at Griesheim, Rheinhessen Darmstadt, on October 23, 1807 and was married in 1829.

Susanna was the second daughter of her parents and as far as I know, she had five brothers and two sisters. Two of the brothers died in childhood, John and Jacob. The names of the others are as follows; Henry, David, Marie, Peter, (Susanna) and Anna.

Her father died in 1848 and her mother remained a widow for four years until in 1852 when she married John Kraemer of Oberflorsheim, Hessen Darmstadt, and the same year, with him and her family, migrated to America. For this family also, Lee County, Iowa was their first residential place. After several years they sold their farm and in March of 1856 moved to Summerfield, Saint Clair County Illinois. In the beginning of the year 1860, and in company with other friends, Susanna made a visit to Iowa. After a stay of a number of weeks, I was permitted to escort her to her home. It was on this occasion that our love for each other, which had already manifested itself during her stay in Iowa, had ripened to the extent that soon after, our engagement as partners in life took place. The result was that we were married on April 6, 1862. The ceremony was performed by the now deceased brother, Daniel Hege, after a sincere and earnest sermon, text, Joshua 24:15.

Heart to heart and hand in hand, as the blessed of the Lord we now continued lifes journey together, constantly experiencing the sacredness of marriage with God's guidnace, also the truth in the words, "A joy shared is a double joy, pain shared is only half as painful". But Oh, now how short are the joys of

life and how short life itself.

Now as I write this, February 6, 1884, the heart of this dear companion and Mother no longer beats. Seven sad months have passed since this dear one has been called home and for me our married life remains a sweet memory.

After living together thirteen years in Illinois, we felt led by the Lord to move to Kansas and in the spring of 1875 we followed his leading. Here we were permitted to spend nine happy years together until the Lord in his wisdom seen fit to deal other-wise. Twenty two years and three months after the day of our marriage came the hour of parting. How long will it be till we meet again? Only Lord knows. It is his leading. May His will be done.

Part No. 3

The children which the Lord gave to us, some of whom preceded mother into eternity, are as follows;

Born in Summerfield Illinois

Barbara Anna; born on December 30, 1862 at 4:00 P.M.

Jacob Herman; born April 13, 1865 at 5:30 P. M.

died on May 15, 1865 at 4:00 A.M.

Burial text, Psalms 16:6 by David Hirschler.

Maria Clara; born May 17, 1866 at 4:00 A.M.

died on April 13, 1869 at 11:30 P.M.

Burial text, 1 Peter 1:8, Psalms 10: 3-15-16  
by Hirschler and Schmidt.

Kathryn Emma; born September 11, 1870 at 3:00 P.M.

Peter Paul; born June 29, 1873 at 4:30 A.M.

Born in Kansas

Christian Adam; born September 7, 1875 at 7:00 A.M.

died on August 5, 1900.

Mary Elizabeth; born July 30, 1877 A.M.

Susanna Ida; born November 23, 1879 A.M.

Valentine David; born June 25, 1882 P.M.

Prisca Naomi; born July 4, 1884 at 9:30 A.M.

Besides these, there were two premature children which were buried privately, one, a girl, was buried in the cemetery at Summerfield Illinois, in the same

grave with Maria Clara. The other, a boy, was buried in the south east corner of the garden in Kansas. Following were three miscarriages, among them a pair of twins. Had all these become matured, there would have been sixteen children from fifteen births. The last, Prisca Naomi, being followed by Mothers death. Of this I will write in another chapter.

Part No. 4

THE GOING HOME OF MOTHER SUSANNA

Beloved children, most of you have mourned with me, the early death of your dear Mother and understandingly saw her into her grave. Although of her last days, and of the detailed circumstances, which were the real cause of her death only a few of you know the particulars. Some of you were too young to understand, so I could not tell you all of this, but it shall not be kept from you. That is the reason I am putting this into writing and I ask of you older children, that in case of my death, that you let the younger children, as they grow older, read this.

As I have stated in the preceding chapter, your mother was pregnant for the fifteenth time, usually she was in much better health during pregnancy than other-wise and so it was this time until about half the time had elapsed. From this time on she began to suffer. Her feet swelled, her chest became congested so that she often complained of having difficulty in breathing and it became difficult for her to carry on the house work. This condition increased as her pregnancy progressed. From my opinion as well as the understanding of Dr. Whitlock, whom I consulted, as well as from the experience of women, it seemed to be a complication of her pregnancy, which we had hoped would ease up when her time was full-filled, but of this we were mistaken, as I soon became convinced that she had dropsy. The last part of her time became especially more difficult and more and more our hopes became mingled with thoughts of death. Because of the swelling of her legs into the abdomen and the

congestion of her lungs, it was impossible for her to be about without help. It also was impossible for her to lie down because of shortness of breath, she sat most of the time during the day in an easy chair and at night in bed becoming weaker as the time went by because of lack of sleep. Harvest time came and it was necessary for me to go into the field. Only in the evening was it possible for me to sit with her and talk with her intimately, enjoy her precious presence, cheer and comfort her. Blessed hours, in which our trust in the Lord became strengthened, but as for me, thoughts of our parting were called to my mind more and more. From day to day we patiently waited for a change, which was somewhat delayed. With great, yes exemplary patience, she gave herself in complete surrender to the will of God. Only seldom did she give way to such utterances as "Oh if there only would be a change soon. This is getting to be almost unbearable".

It was in the morning of July 4, 1884, when it seemed to her that a time for a change had come. She sat in a chair as I prepared a bed for her. In the meantime her pains had ceased and I went into the field with expectation however, of being called soon thereafter. At eight o'clock, and at this time there was no doubt of it, but that the time had come for deliverance. I sent for Aunt Barbara and because of her difficulty of breathing and because of the heat it was necessary to have all the doors and windows open, and because of her weakened condition it was necessary to avoid disturbances. I sent you children along. But Oh, this was the parting from your dear mother. You could not be permitted to see her alive again.

Soon after I came to the house her condition had become critical. Breathing became very difficult and her pulse became weak and a desperate struggle for breath followed and she wanted to get up and go. By doing what we could for her to the best of our know-

ledge, and by warming her feet, she quieted down so that her condition seemed normal again. In spite of this, with a clear mind and definite expression of her thoughts, she remarked, "You will see that this is my last!"

As the birth proceeded and her last strength was exhausted, the clock showing 9:30 A.M., Prisca was born, then faint and pale, Mother's head sank into the pillow. Had we not strengthened her immediately with stimulants, she would have passed away at this time. For about an hour this condition lasted with one faint after another setting in, followed with a severe pain in the chest and a shortness of breath. With still a faint flicker of hope existing for her recovery, I tried to cheer and comfort her. I spoke to her of the healthy baby she had just brought into the world and how graciously the Lord had seen her through and that he would not for-sake her at this time either. To this she answered, "No, he will not for-sake me, but this time he really measured out a severe punishment". Her condition seemed to ease but from time to time in a strained voice she would cry out, "Rest, Rest, if I could only rest!"

I was called to the table and since Aunt Barbara would have it no other way, I went and she stayed at Mother's bedside. Just as I was about to go in to her again, Barbara called me. I was permitted once more to look into those friendly eyes before they closed forever. After several short breaths with my hand on her forehead and my prayer accompanying her to the gates of eternity, she was no more. It was eleven thirty. Her prayers were heard and her longing was fulfilled, she was called to her rest.

The Lord strengthened me wonderfully and with a joyful spirit I could follow her to the grave, with praise and thanksgiving for the free salvation which after so much pain and suffering, is her portion for ever. Children, let us now strive for this salvation which was given to her.

#### A SHORT CHAPTER AND FAMILY STATISTICS FOR THE CHILDREN OF VALENTINE AND MARY KREHBIEL

A number of years have passed since the preceding chapter of my life was written in regards to the departed wife and Mother Susanna. In regards to myself the chapter will not be closed until the evening of my life and until my own life has ended. As a number of years have passed, much more can now be added and written as a second part. Since it has pleased the Lord to permit me to remain in the circle of my good family (February 1902) and has given me the time to do so, I will add this second part trusting that the Lord will grant me the necessary strength and time.

First I will give a synopsis of the years that I was a widower.

It is the case that before God leads his children through the dark valleys he has already provided the necessary strength and courage to willingly and joyfully follow his leading. Because of this fact it is often the case, that we should be more willing to gracefully accept a cross and later to bear it more willingly to his honor and to his glory. So it was the case. Wonderfully strengthened by the Lord and joyful in spirit we accompanied Mother Susanna to her grave, but as I had already anticipated, dark and grievous hours followed and many times we sighed heavily in such nights when it was especially keenly felt that the light of the house had gone out and its sun had set, when again we wrestled for renewed faith, which the Lord freely gave to us. Although it is not my duty or intention to go into detail of all the sorrows and difficulties of this bereavement, it would not be just for me to write only of the grievous hours and the darkest times because there were many times when God comforted through his precious promises to the widowed and orphaned as often a mother comforts. This too, needs to be mentioned, to His honor and His glory.

In order to lighten the work of house keeping it

was necessary to decrease farming operations. Then instead of farming all of the land myself, I rented some of it out. We hired some help for the housework but this generally brought its difficulties and then too, seldom the desired results. Anna took the baby and cared for it until it was again possible for me to care for her in our home. One year and ten months passed in this way until the Lord saw fit again to again provide another person, a mother, and a wife.

#### THE SECOND MARRIAGE

The thought of a second marriage, for myself was not reconcilable, much more, unbearable, as I most definitely felt that, "Only ONE and especially only this woman could ever be the wife of my bosom". This idea was not easily dismissed from my mind, even now when because of the circumstances such thoughts were harboured. Again I dismissed the thought because of the complexity of the entire problem. It required not only a motherly person for the children, but too the uppermost question remained, "Where, if at all could such a person be found?"

But see. While being troubled with such thoughts and while because of household circumstances it became more necessary to decidedly take steps in that direction, our Heavenly Father had already made provision for that which in humility I had prayed for; although I could not yet fully understand. Then in my perplexity I came to the point where I willingly and trustingly, committed my affairs into the hands of the Lord and immediately light began to dawn and brought about the meeting and the joining for life with the person of His choice. In shame I dropped my eyelids and with the warmest thanksgiving I acknowledged, "All this the Lord has done, a miracle before our eyes".

In the beginning of the year 1886, Mother Kathryn Dester came to Kansas from Washington County, Iowa, with her family. On the sixteenth of May of the same year, the marriage took place, between me and her

daughter Mary, in the Church at Halstead, Kansas and brother Christian Krehbiel performed the ceremony.

Maria Dester is the second child of her parents, John Dester and Kathryn Rupp, and was born November 14, 1856 "In the Zion Church" Franklin Township, Lee County Iowa. In 1855 her parents came from Maxweiler Koenigreich Baiern (Kingdom of Bavaria) to America and immediately settled in Lee County but later they moved to Washington County, from where, after there were several deaths, the remainder of the family moved to Kansas.

The Dester parents had in all, eight children, in the following order;

John Dester; died in infancy.

Maria Dester

Jacob Dester

Anna Dester

Abraham Dester; died in 1881.

Christian Dester; died in 1882.

Elizabeth Dester.

John Dester, the father was born on December 19, 1827 and died on November 28, 1881 at the age of 53 years, 11 months and nine days.

Mother, Kathryn Rupp Dester was born on September 28, 1834.

After the bounteous wedding which was held in the home of her parents with relatives and friends, we, Mary and I, drove home on the same evening where the children were waiting for us and to our surprise had a nice meal ready for us. Without effort and almost of itself, the family adjusted itself to the present order and an upright, peaceful atmosphere prevailed in the home and joy radiated from the faces of all and once more the sweet incomparable name "Mother", once more resounded in the home with full accord and with it, new life. Blessed Life. It is unforgettable indeed what unspeakable blessings the coming of this mother brought into our home.

Again new efforts were put into our farming oper-

ations and we again undertook to farm all the land ourselves on the old farm on the east side of the Little Arkansas River. But about this time, because of changes in the conditions of the Church, besides other circumstances, a decision was made to sell the property and buy another farm nearer to the Church. So in the fall of 1893 a move was made and the new and present home up to this date is S.E. 1/4 Section 3, Township 22, Range 2.

#### CHILDREN OF THIS MARRIAGE

Martha Johanna; born December 26, 1887 at 5:00 P.M.  
Esther Amalia; born April 21, 1889 at 2:30 P.M.  
Lydia Selma; born October 9, 1890 at 5:30 P.M.  
Selma Hermina; born April 1, 1892 at 8:30 P.M.  
David Solomon; born January 29, 1894 at 9:00 P.M.  
Prisca Geraldine; born February 7, 1896  
at 12:30 A.M.  
Ernest John; born September 17, 1898 at 11:00 P.M.  
Erhard Herman; born April 4, 1900 at 7:30 P.M.

Including the children of the first marriage that I mentioned on a previous page, may the Lord grant that under his guidance, all of these may grow and become citizens of the heavenly kingdom.

#### CONCLUDING REMARKS

I might have made the conclusion here, and given over what the future has further for me to another pen; but since it has been laid on my heart to write this second part I also feel moved to add briefly a few more thoughts.

It is really not an incurable sickness which is keeping me bound and which brings me thoughts above every day life. For quite some time as I am now convinced, I have carried it in my system and paid but little attention to it, only so far as accounting it to my age. Finally it came to me in fullness, leaving no doubt as to the seriousness of its character, compelling me to completely lay down all active service which I had been able to give without hindrance to my family and to the Church up until now. I stood

and perhaps, stand now, at the brink of the grave. I wrestled mightily with death.

The Doctors diagnosed--- the heart is filled with water, besides is so weak that a strengthened condition was questionably yet seemingly not impossible.

With much suffering and pain, I endured choking spells and heart pains. In his grace, the Lord stood by me, preserved my life, and the medicines we used were blessed with results. The backbone of the sickness was broken, and I felt so much easier and again we were given hopes that life's activities might be taken up again and that I might be able to remain with my family for a longer period of time. God only knows the realities. According to human understanding there has been a change for the better and above exception I have made progress toward recovery. With humble thanksgiving I now look backward on almost unbearable suffering and I wholeheartedly praise God for the loving sacrificial care which has been granted to me. I am also so confident that in His Wisdom and Love He doeth all things well and that he giveth strength far greater than our burdens.

Oh, what a comfort is ours. In such dark nights of deepest suffering, as in faith we look upon this man of Sorrows, our dearly beloved Saviour, in the darkest hours in which He has suffered for us.

Since I can no longer carry on life's activities as I had been able to up to now, they have become of small concern to me and instead, my mind is occupied with other thoughts which I try to follow and carry out as strength and the leading spirit will permit. Of such are the foregoing thoughts. May this, as a loving memory of myself, serve as a blessing to my family and Honor and Glory to God.

Very often too, I am reminded of the last days and hours of Mother Susanna, of her good example of patience in her extreme suffering, the experience of which I now have understanding. The Lord help us all through cross and to crown.

"I now commit my soul into the heart and hands of  
God and peacefully await His leading, goal and end.

Lord I now commit my soul to thee;  
My God, My God, forsake me not,  
into thy hands receive me.  
When my lips no more can speak,  
may my last breath accepted be,  
through Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen.

Dear God, from all distress,  
relieve my soul at last."

Written June 25, 1902, by Valentine Krehbiel.

The last paragraph above, is a translation of the  
following German prayer.

Meine Seele senket sich in Gottes Herz und Haende;  
und erwardet ruhiglich, seiner Wege, Ziel und Ende.  
Liegst still und Willenlos,  
in des liebsten Vaters Schooss.  
Herr mein Geist befehl ich dir;  
Mein Gott, Mein Gott, weih nicht von mir,  
nimm mich in deine Haende.  
Und wenn ich nicht mehr reden kann,  
so nimm den letzten zeufzer ann,  
durch Jesum Christum, Amen.  
Wahrer Gott aus Aller Noth,  
hilf mir an meinem Ende.





## PREFACE

The following is taken from the J. J. Krehbiel Genealogy. It was compiled in 1900 by J. J. Krehbiel of Moundridge, Kansas. It is written in the German language and covers a period in the seventeenth century when the great persecution of the Anabaptists broke out in Switzerland.

It briefly covers the migration of the Krehbiel Family from Switzerland in the year 1671 to parts of Germany, Austria and Russia and from these Countries to the United States of America where they settled in various States of the Union.

The entire Krehbiel Genealogy being too large, it is not given in its entirety, but only that section which shows the lineage into the Ruth Family.

By Albert J. Ruth.

## FROM THE

## J. J. KREHBIEL GENEALOGY

MOUNDRIDGE, KANSAS, MARCH 1900.

In dem jahr 1671, und den folgenden jahren, brach in der Schweiz eine verfolgung der Mennonitten aus; sie wurden eingesperrt, gepeinigt und wen sie ihren glauben nicht abwohnen, auch getotet und ihre Guter beraubt.

Da konnte mann noch froh sein, wermit leger sand diesen Drangfallen entrennen konnten was wohl für ganzen Familien fast unmöglich sein mächten.

So wurden denn eine anzahl unsere vorvaters ihres glaubens mögen durch feuer, schwert und wasser getotet und beraubt.

Da warum der Graf zu Nassau, Karl August, welcher damals uber die Rheinpfalz herrschte so gutig und gab den verfolgten in seinem Lande religious duldung.

So kamen den viele der Bruder von ihren Heimatlichen Bergen herab in die Rheinpfalz und siedelten sich dan dort an und beleiden mit der zeit viele Gemeinde, die noch bis auf unsere zeit meisters noch bestende gemeinde nachgewissen werden kommen.

Denn beim sturm der zeit selbst die Franzochisen revolution machte nicht sie zu vermachten.

Gott gebe ihnen gesegneten Bestand bis ans ende.

Unter diesen Ausgewanderten besandlich auch Jost Krehbiel, als unser Stammvater von welchen wir Kunde haben, gekaufte sich im jahr 1709, das Pachgut Primmerhof, in der Gemeinde Sipperfeld, von den Caspar Scheerer mit der ernte auf dem felde für 1200 Gulden an. Dies warren den herrschaftlicher Guter welch auf lebenszeit auch Kinder erblich verpachtet wurden, daher Erbpacht gennent, spater kauften sie diese erbpacht als eigenthum.

Weil diese Guter durch den dreizig jahrigen Krieg meist vermistet waren, aber durch fleiz und sparsamkeit unseren vorvaters wieder in solchen stand gesetzt wurden wie es nur zu thun möglich war.

Kinder hatte diesen Jost Krehbiel, wie folgt, Joh Jacob, Jost, Anna-Maria, Anna-Katherina, Christian und Anna.

Jost Krehbiel starb im jahr 1722, und seine witve Suethe bei der graflichen Regierung nach denn Primmerhof in Zwei Theile zu vertheilen, musste aber für die verfolgungen, 100 Gulden an der Riegierung bezahlen und erheilt untern November 16, 1723, einen neuen Erbstandsbrief auf sich unter-schreiben, von Karl August, Graf zu Nassau. Sie blieb witve bis zu ihrem todt.

Denn in Zwei theilen gemachte Primmerhof bekammen

Joh Jacob und Jost, letzurere wohnten nur 10 jahre alda, verkaufte der dan seinem anteil Hof and seinem Bruder Christ, welche in Elzas, in der gegend von Kranweigenburg, wohnschaft war um 1800 Gulden.

Dieser zog nicht selbst dahin, sonderen verhente den Hof einige jahre um 30 Bold jährlich.

Ehr erhielt dan aber unterm April 29, 1733, einem neuen Erbstandsbrief auf sich und seine Ehefrau unterschreiben, von Karl August, Graf zu Nassau. Sein sohn, Jacob erheilte nach der hand den Hof das ganze pacht des Hofes, betrug gegen 300 Morgen Nassaushen feldmessig.

Johan Jacob, alten von Jost Krehbiel, halt einen Erbstandsbrief an bis den 18 Dezember, 1756, wo ehr seine Ehefrau leist, von Der Graf zu Nassau.

Der sterbfalstag und jahr beider ehelente wurden nicht auf ge siechnet gefunden.

Ihre Kinder warren, Peter, Johan-Jacob, Micheal, Anna, Magdalena und Maria.

Peter hatte sich ein hof auf den wege eine halbe stunde von der Primmerhof entfernten Rippert gekauft aber verliez derselben wieder und zog mit mehrenten aus der gegend nach Leinburg, Oesterreich, ungefehr im jahr 1770.

Johannes Krehbiel, sohn von Jacob Krehbiel, von Klaushof, zog nach America, im Staate Pennsylvania, im jahr 1792.

Viele andere zogen noch spater von 1831 biz 1854, nach verschiedene Staade der Union.

John Carl Krehbiel zog nach Iowa im jahr 1880.

Peter Krehbiel nahm Land an bei Lemburg und betrieb Acherbau an 15 jahre, dan zog ehr mit einigen familien nach Russland.

Government Tsheringoff da warien Bruderhof Raten-eus Reditschoff.

Da wohnten sie blos vier jahre, es gefiel ihnen nicht recht bei der Bruderhoffer unt entschlossen sich weiter zu reisen, und so kamen sie an der Ort, Michalin, in dem Government Kliev. Da wohnten sie

drei jahre, von da gingen sie weiter nach dem Government Wolhynien, an der Ort, Beresina, bei Dubna. Da wohnten sie auch drei jahre.

Hier wurde von dem Furst, Lubaminsky, eine papier muehle bebaut. Infolge diesen ihr land überschwemmt werde, dann gab der Furst ihnen eine Meilen entfront Wegnannt, da betrieben sie Acherbau an siebenzehn jahre.

Durch die ganze zeit ihren reisen warten die drei Familien, Krehbiel, Berger und Muller, besammen.

Doch von Lemburg Oesterreich, hatte sich die familie, Schrag, ihnen angeschlossen so das sie von dazu, vier familien ihre reisen thaten.

Ungefaher im jahre 18-5, kamen mehren Bruder aus Polen, die nahmen auch land an dem Furst, Lubaminsky an dem Ort, Edwardhof. Dort wurded eine Gemeinde gegründet, an welche sich die vier Familien, Krehbiel, Berger, Muller und Schrag, ebenfalls antschlossen.

Peter Krehbiel hatte acht Kinder, Christ, Peter, Johannes, Heinrich, Micheal, Susanna und Magdalena, welche alle nach Edwardhof übersiedelten, ebenso die familien, Berger und Schrag. Vater Peter Krehbiel starb in Wegnanky, etwas 60 jahre alt.

In Edwardhof wohnten sie 43 jahre, dan zogen mehrende weider noch 160 englische meilen Ost, Kries, Shitamir, an der Ort, Kotusowaka. Hier kauften sie sich eigenthum und wohnten daselbst 14 jahre. Doch daweil uns in Zukumft die freiheit nicht mehr fallte gestaatet werdend, so entschlossen sich alle, Russland zu verlassen, und am anfang August, 1874, wurde die reise nach Nord America angetreten und in der ersten tagen im September, landeten wir in New York, und da bleiben wir einige tagen im Castle Garden. Dan ging es wieder weiter (zu bahn) dem feinen Westen zu wahr wir uns in Staate Kansas, in McPherson County ansudeten. Wo dan die Gemeinde, Hofnungsfeld, organisiert wurde, mit dem Altern, Jacob Stucky und der Prediger Jacob D. Garing.

Moundridge, Kansas, 1900. J. J. Krehbiel.

## THE TRANSLATION FROM THE GERMAN

## J. J. Krehbiel Genealogy

Moundridge, Kansas, March 1900.

In the year of 1671, and the years that followed, a great persecution of the Mennonites broke out anew in Switzerland.

They were tortured and imprisoned and when they would not recant their religious belief, were robbed of their possessions and sometimes, even murdered.

We can still be glad that our ancestors were able to endure this oppression, for to some families, the situation was such that it was almost unbearable.

Under these conditions, a number of our ancestors stood up through fire, sword and water and were even robbed and murdered because they had the stamina to stand up for the religion of their choice.

Karl August, Count of Nassau, benevolent ruler of the Palatinate, invited the persecuted Mennonites to come and settle on his land, offering them religious tolerance and freedom.

Through this invitation, many of these persecuted families left their beloved homes in Switzerland and migrated into the Palatinate, where they settled and made their homes for many years (over two centuries) without any serious difficulty. Here, they prospered and grew, establishing many new Congregations, some of which are still in existence at this writing.

They were all satisfied and contented here, even the French Revolution failed to discourage them. God gave them blessed understanding and stood by them to the end.

Among this group of immigrants was Jost Krehbiel, our early ancestor of whom we have a record.

In the year of 1709, Jost Krehbiel bought the inheritance lease-hold estate "Pfrimmerhof", together with the crops that were on the fields, from Caspar Scherer for 1,200 Gulden.

The "Pfrimmerhof" was originally a Lordly Estate located in the Community (parish) of Sippersfeld. It was made available for life through a contract which was inheritable, hence the name, Erbpacht. This contracted inheritance was converted into the fee title ownership on a later date.

The Pfrimmerhof was practically devastated during the Thirty Years War, but through much diligence and thrift, our ancestors put it back in good condition.

The children of Jost Krehbiel were: John Jacob, Jost, Anna Maria, Anna Katherine, Christian (II) and Anna.

Jost Krehbiel died in the year of 1722. His widow petitioned the Count to divide the Pfrimmerhof into two equal parts, for which she had to pay the sum of 100 Gulden. On November 16, 1723, the widow received her new deed signed by Karl August, Count of Nassau.

Magdalena remained a widow the rest of her life. After her death, the Pfrimmerhof was divided equally between John Jacob and Jost. Jost kept his share for ten years and then sold it to his brother Christian who lived in Elsas near Kranweigenburg, his property was worth about 1,800 Gulden. Christian did not move onto the Pfrimmerhof himself, but rented it out for an indefinite period.

On April 29, 1733, Christian got a new hereditary lease from Karl August, Count of Nassau, made out to Christian and his wife. On a later date, Jacob, his son, inherited the entire Pfrimmerhof. It consisted of around 300 Morgens (German acres). (A little over 700 American acres, depending entirely upon how the Morgen compared to the French Hectare, which was the usual standard at that time.)

Johan Jacob, oldest son of Jost Krehbiel, held a hereditary lease, which included his wife, from the

Count of Nassau until December 18, 1756. The date of the death of Johan Jacob and his wife are unknown.

Their children were; Peter, Johan Jacob, Micheal, Anna Magdalena and Maria.

Peter bought himself a home around Rippert, about a one half hours drive from the Pfrimmerhof. He sold it about the year of 1770 for the purpose of migrating to Lemburg, Austria with a group of other people living in this same vicinity.

Johannes Krehbiel, son of Jacob Krehbiel from the Klaushof, immigrated to America in the year of 1792, and settled in the State of Pennsylvania.

Many others immigrated to America from the period of 1831 to 1854 and settled in various States of the Union.

John Carl Krehbiel immigrated to America in 1833, went back to Germany in 1835. On April 27, 1837, he was married to Anna Wohlgemuth, went back to America in that same year, worked for his brother in Butler County, Ohio for a time and then went to Lee County, Iowa and landed in Fort Madison, Iowa on November 1, 1839 and lived in West Point Township until in 1880.

Peter Krehbiel leased some land near Lemburg and farmed it for 15 years, after which time he migrated to Russia with several other families. They went to the Government Tscheringoff to a settlement known as Bruderhof Rateneus Reditschoff.

They lived here for four years, they did not feel at ease among the Bruderhoffer, so they agreed to go further and travelled toward the region of Michalin, located in the Government of Kliev. Here, they lived for another three years and then travelled on toward the Government Wolhynien, in the region of Beresina by Dubna. Here, they lived for another three years.

Here, Prince Lubaminsky built a paper mill. This caused their land to be flooded, so the Prince gave them some land with a one mile front near Wegnannt. They acquired some of this land and lived here for a period of seventeen years.

Three families, Krehbiel, Berger and Mueller, all left the Palatinate at the same time and traveled in a group until they came to Lemburg, Austria, where a family named Schrag attached themselves to the group so that from this point on, there were four families traveling together.

About the year of 18-5, a number of Brethren came into the Edwardhof area from Poland and leased some land from Prince Lubaminsky. Here, the group founded a new Congregation, and the four families, Krehbiel, Berger, Mueller and Schrag, affiliated with it, when they moved into the Edwardhof area on a later date.

Peter Krehbiel had eight children; Christ, Peter, Johannes, Heinrich, Micheal, Susanna and Magdalena, all of whom settled in the region of Edwardhof. The Berger and Schrag families settled in this area too.

They lived in Edwardhof for forty three years and then some of these families moved 160 English miles toward the east to the District of Shitimar, located in the region of Kotusowaka. Here, they bought some land and lived on it for a period of fourteen years.

About this time, the political situation was such that the Government would not give these people any guarantee that they would be able to enjoy religious freedom for any great length of time in the future. Since this privilege was going to be taken away from them, the group decided to leave Russia and emigrate to North America.

The trip to North America was begun in the first part of the month of August in the year of 1874, and on the first few days of September, we landed in New York and remained in Castle Garden for several days. From here, we went westward (by train) to McPherson County, Kansas, where we made our new home. Here, we organized a new Congregation, "Hoffnungsfeld" (field of hope), with the aid of the aged Jacob Stucky and the Reverend Jacob D. Garing.

Moundridge, Kansas, 1900. J. J. Krehbiel.

Translated by Albert J. Ruth, July 6, 1955.



FROM THE KREHBIEL FAMILY ALBUM

GRANDMOTHER MARIE KREHBIEL

BY

EMMA K. BACHMANN

FROM THE KREHBIEL FAMILY ALBUM

In the seventeenth century a great persecution broke out in Switzerland against the Anabaptists. Many of them were killed, others died in prison and still others, perhaps the larger part of them, were driven out and banished from the country which they loved.

Among these were three brothers, Micheal, Jost and Peter Crayenbuehl. Their father had been thrown into prison and most likely tortured to force him to recant. He was kept in prison until he died. After his death, his sons sold their estates, the "Crayenbuehl", and then emigrated into Germany where they settled in the Palatinate (Rhein Pfalz). Here they changed their name to Krehbiel.

In the year of 1709, Jost Krehbiel bought the inheritance lease-hold estate, the Pfrimmerhof, in the District of Sippersfeld, with the crops included for 1200 Gulden. The estate was owned by Lords and was leased on long terms to be passed on to the children and was called an inheritance lease (Erbpacht). We find that the lease was renewed several times.

Like most of the Palatinate, this property was devastated during the Thirty Years War; but by the diligence and thrift of the new owners, was soon put into good condition again.

Jost Krehbiel had six children, namely; Johann Jacob, Jost, Anna-Marie, Anna-Katherine, Christian and Anna. Jost, the father, died in 1722. The widow, Magdalena, petitioned the Ruling Count to divide the Pfrimmerhof into two parts, for which she had to pay 100 Gulden. Under the date of November 16, 1723, she received a new deed, signed by Karl August, Count of Nassau.

Magdalena remained a widow. After her death the Pfrimmerhof was divided between the two eldest sons, Johann Jacob and Jost. The latter kept his share for ten years and then sold it to his brother Christian, who lived in Alsace, near Kranweissenburg. Christian did not live on the Pfrimmerhof himself, but rented it out for several years.

On April 29, 1733, he obtained another deed for himself, signed by Karl August, the Count of Nassau. Later, the estate was transferred to his son, Jacob. The undivided estate contained about 300 acres.

Jacob and his wife had six sons and one daughter, namely; Christian, Katherina, Jacob, Johannes, Jost, Heinrich and Joseph. Christian married into the Lohmuhle, Jacob to Klaushof, Johannes to Weierhof, Jost took over the Pfrimmerhof, and Heinrich married Anna Krehbiel from the Mill in Wartenburg, a little village near Sembach, and took over the Mill. Here Maria was born on February 13, 1800.

Napoleonic Wars

Since this was the time of the Napoleonic Wars, in which the Palatinate was often over-run by bands of French Soldiery, the younger years of Maria, her younger sister, Katherina, and her three older brothers were rather full of fear and strain.

At that time the hills or mountains surrounding the little village of Wartenburg were covered with

dense forests. On top of the tallest of these mountains, from which the village took its name, were the ruins of an old castle, the halls of which often served as a hiding place for the inhabitants of this village. There was always a look-out on the top of the mountain, day and night, where he watched the road leading to the village for the French soldiery. He could see them while they were yet quite a good distance away. The alarm would be given immediately and everyone prepared for flight. The cattle were driven into the forest, where they soon were out of sight. Men, women, and even children were laden with as much clothes, bedding and food as each one could carry, and soon everybody was hid in the forest and on the way to the castle where everyone disappeared. There seemed to have been enough room in the halls of the castle to make them all somewhat comfortable, while shrubs and vines covered and hid the entrance.

After the look-outs reported the departure of the marauders, the people returned to their homes, which they found in a terrible condition--furniture having been smashed and broken up, dishes broken, featherbeds and pillows were slashed open and the feathers scattered all over the house. If the villagers were not warned in time, it really went hard with them. Their cattle were then driven away, the houses were pillaged and robbed, the people were beaten and were often killed if they could not produce some money or other valuables. This happened more than once in all portions of the Palatinate.

#### Weierhof

On January 13, 1821, Maria was married to Johannes Krehbiel from the Weierhof near Marnheim at the foot of Donnersberg which is the highest mountain in the Palatinate. For some time they lived with his mother in the mill, while the house, which perhaps was built by Johannes's grandfather, was remodelled. For this reason this house was called the new house, and the inhabitants were given the name, Neuhanne,

(Newjohn), while his neighbor was called Althannes, (Oldjohn). These names were still applied to both of the families long after they came to America.

A large family grew up in the home of Johannes and Maria. The year of 1847 was a tragic one for the inhabitants of the Weierhof. In the summer a Typhoid Fever epidemic broke out in the village and there was scarcely a family that did not lose one or more of their number. Grandfather's family was no exception. On July 30, a daughter died at the age of 18. Later a son died at the age of 11. On the first of September, the father of the family passed away at the age of 54. He was convalescing from Typhoid fever when he was stricken with pneumonia to which he succumbed.

At the time of his death, the whole family was in bed with the epidemic, so that not one of them could attend his funeral. They never knew which grave was his. Grandmother told in later years how she, from her bed, made all the arrangements for his funeral. She was left with five sons and two daughters, of whom only one son and one daughter were of age.

The year 1848 brought revolution to Germany, and the Palatinate swarmed with rebels. Grandmother had paid a large sum of money to the Government in order to free her oldest sons from service in the Army. Now the rebels came to force the two oldest sons to fight against the Government. Since that was against their conscience, they left their home and hid in the forest of the Donnersberg, while the insurgents were quartered in the village. After they had been defeated and driven out, the Prussians came and took up quarters, and after them the Bavarians. So they got their fill of the military.

#### Leaving for America

These experiences may have helped them in making the decision to leave their homeland and come to the United States of America.

In 1851, grandfather's brother, Jacob Krehbiel I,



left Germany and with his family sailed for America. Grandmother's son, Henry, accompanied them. Some of their relatives had left the Weierhof for America, a year or two earlier.

In the summer of 1852, a number of families left the Rhein Pfalz (Palatinate) for an unknown future in a strange country. Amongst them was Grandmother Krehbiel and her family, as well as her sister's family, the Jacob Schnebeles from Zweibrucken. Their brothers remained in Germany.

After a very tiresome ocean voyage of over fifty days, they arrived in New York. Here they waited several days before starting on the long and wearisome journey across the country. First they took a steamboat up the Hudson River to Albany. From there they took a train to Buffalo. Here they took a steamboat and crossed Lake Erie to Toledo. From there another long train ride of two days brought them to Chicago. A good deal of this time was spent on the sidetracks waiting for the freight trains to pass. Since they had not expected to be on the train for two days, their food supply gave out. So some of the young men went out to farm houses, while the trains were waiting on the siding, to buy food. In Chicago, which at that time had perhaps only ten or fifteen thousand inhabitants, the women went to the lake to do their family washing.

West of Chicago, there were few, if any railroads at that time. So they left Chicago on a canal boat to the Illinois River, then went down this river to Peoria. It seems that at some places, the water in the river was so low that the boatmen had to get out into the river and pull the boat with ropes, until they got into deeper water again.

The company of immigrants had stayed intact until they came to Peoria. From here, some of them went by stagecoach to Burlington, Iowa, while another party, including my grandmother and family, seemed to have sailed down the Illinois River to the Mississippi,

then up this river to Keokuk, Iowa, from where they had twenty-five miles farther overland to their destination on the Franklin Prairie.

On Sunday afternoon, August the 22, three months after they left their homes, they arrived at their destination, happy that the long journey was finally ended.

#### Prairies of Iowa

The change from the beautiful surroundings of the Palatinate, to the bleak prairies of Iowa, must have been quite shocking, especially to the middle aged members of this group. Very little of this prairie was yet under cultivation, in contrast to their well cultivated acres at the Weierhof. The houses here were small and were a half mile or more apart, while in Germany they had large houses and lived close together in the "Hof" or village. The Palatinate had many well kept forests in close proximity, while on the prairie there were no trees except a few small ones the early settlers had planted and the distant forests were not as well kept as in the old country. It was quite a contrast to the old home.

But Grandmother did not waste any time. Before a month had passed she bought several homesteads, each with small houses, from the old settlers and soon had her family housed as good as possible before the winter set in.

With her family, she joined the newly organized Zion Mennonite Church at Donnellson (See "Mennonites Settle in Lee County, Iowa", Mennonite Life, October 1953), of which she remained a faithful member for twenty-three years, until her death on December 29, 1875.

Some of her descendants are still living in Iowa, but the greater part of them are scattered all over the United States, from the Atlantic to the Pacific and from the Great Lakes to Oklahoma.

"Appeared in the July 1955 issue of the Mennonite Life, published at North Newton, Kansas".