

Der Brief

Fall 2021

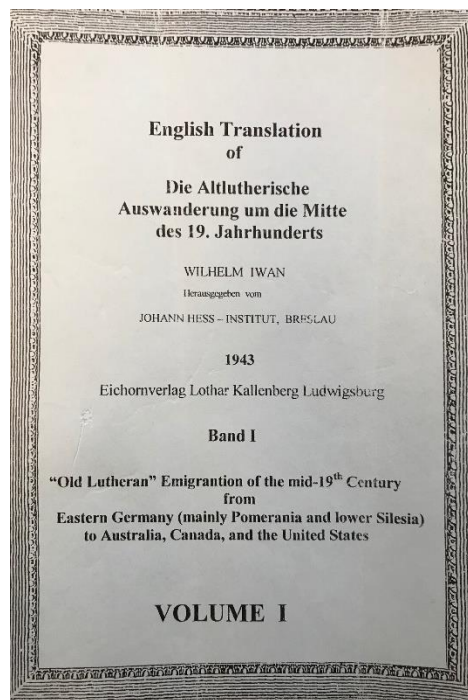
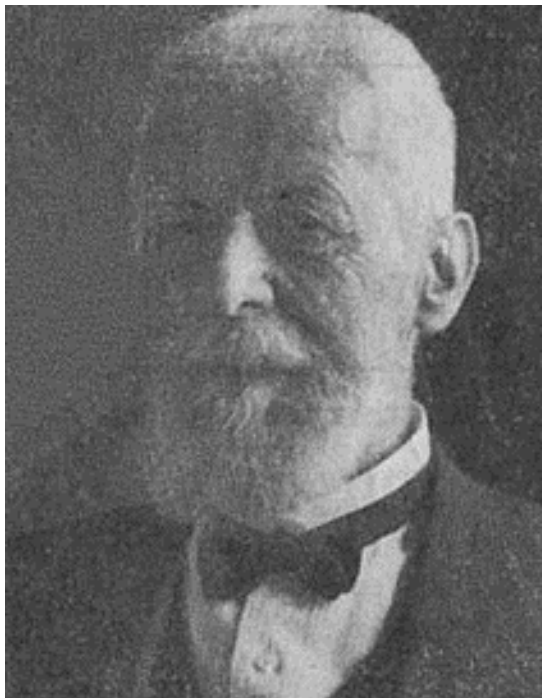


The Newsletter of the Historical Society of North German Settlements in Western New York and Das Haus, Ein Haus und Der Stall German Heritage Museum. 2549 Niagara Road - Bergholz, Niagara Falls, NY 14304. www.dashausmuseum.org, dashausmuseum@gmail.com



Wedding Dress from 1908

When you visit Das Haus this year you will notice a new display in the "Migration Room". John Milleville and the Milleville family have graciously donated the wedding dress of Emma Wienke (1888 – 1979, also pictured in later life in the Wienke family photograph later in this issue) who married Christian "Krist" Haseley (1882 – 1944) on April 30, 1908. The ceremony took place at St. Jacobi, Bergholz and they lived on Saunders Settlement Rd. between Wallmore and Tucarora Rds for some period of time. Christian and Emma had 5 children, the eldest of which was Frances Voelker, John's grandmother. Christ's father and mother were August Haseley (1853 – 1916) and Augusta Hellert.



Wilhelm Iwan, author, historian, and Lutheran theologian lived from 1871 until 1958. As a historian, he documented the 19th century exodus from Prussia to America and Australia by a group who sought religious freedom. In 1945 he fled from his homeland and lived the remainder of his life as a refugee in West Germany

A summary of Wilhelm Iwan's *Die Altlutherische Auswanderung um die Mitte des 19. Jahrhunderts*

Why did our forefathers leave their beloved homeland to venture across the sea to a foreign land where they hadn't any idea of if they would be successful or if they would end up penniless, begging on the street? We believe it was a mixture of many things that had been coming together for years that caused this dramatic decision to be made by so many families.

One of the best sources we can find is the book "Old Lutheran Emigration of the mid-19th century from Eastern Germany" by Wilhelm Iwan. This book details the reasoning of the people, government and how the entire process came about. The Historical Society has a copy of the English translation of this dual volume book. This book tells the story of the migration of which our ancestors were a part in great detail. I have attempted to summarize much of the material and tried to pick out the information that is relevant to Western New York, not including much, but some of the information on the Australian migrations. In some cases the information in the text is opposed to or is different from other sources that we have. The differences could be attributed to translation ambiguities or just similar but different sources for the information. Iwan's style of writing is also somewhat confusing and does not stick to a chronological order in all cases, so some of the stories do not synchronize well, but overall, he presents a very complete overview of the entire Prussian immigration in the mid 1800's. I believe one of his motivations for this research was to identify the people and exact numbers of immigrants that left Germany in that specific time period. Volume two is really a listing of that information with little narrative; it is an assist for those looking for a family name and associated information however. The following pages are the first of 4 installments that will appear in consecutive issues of Der Brief. - Ed

The primary debate centered on the differences between and how to unify the Lutheran and Reformed Protestant confessions. The King wanted to end this debate as it affected both his court and marriage. He and his wife could never take communion together because of their confessional differences. Friedrich William III, King of Prussia during the 1820's – 1840 was determined to unify the Protestant churches, to homogenize their liturgy, their organization and even their architecture. The long-term goal was to have fully centralized royal control of all the Protestant churches in the Prussian Union of churches. In a series of proclamations over several years the *Church of the Prussian Union* was formed, bringing together the majority group of Lutherans, and the minority group of Reformed Protestants. The main effect was that the government of Prussia had full control over church affairs, with the king himself recognized as the leading bishop.



Frederick William III

The King's agenda was rejected by both sides. The Reformed clergy felt that it was based too much on the old Lutheran way and the Lutherans felt it made too many concessions to the Reformed Confession thereby being too "Catholic". This debate raged on for many years and became more and more heated as the leader's personalities from both sides got in the way of compromise. On June 25, 1830, in spite of opposition, the King ordered a large festival as a celebration of the conclusion of his work to form the Prussian Union of Churches. The "Old" Lutheran clergy still continued to fight back by threatening to form an independent church. In a country where the King ruled, this was not viewed favorably as one would imagine. Much of this resistance came from the areas around Breslau, the general area where our ancestors came from. The vast majority of the immigrants continued to profess their allegiance to King and country, but could not tolerate the "forced" state religion as they felt it was destroying their spiritual life.

Many clergy like Kinderman and Ehhrenstrom were excommunicated from the Union church and were later jailed because of their opposition. This left the people without state approved clergy to perform pastoral duties and attend schools and confirmation instruction. The King sanctioned all of this by royal order on March 10th 1834. This final decree dashed the hopes of the Lutherans for an independent church outside of the Union.

The state continued to go after the clergy that were resisting and suspended them, removing them from office or throwing them into prison. In September of 1834 a letter was sent to a local pastor, but due to a clerk's faulty penmanship, the letter was addressed to the entire congregation. When the state's royal commission arrived they found a group of around 2000 persons surrounding the church and would not give up the keys. After much back and forth, on December 23rd at 5 AM 400 foot soldiers and 300 cavalymen invaded the town and surrounded the church which at the time, had around 200 defenders keeping watch. When they refused to turn over the church, the soldiers were ordered to load their weapons and they dispersed the crowd with blows from rifle butts and bayonets. The soldiers stayed in the homes of the defiant church elders and many of the townspeople were imprisoned. As you would imagine word of this incident spread far and wide. If this was the way the state's agenda was to be implemented, serious thought must be given to resisting or migrating. Much of the resistance and the actions described above occurred in the area of Breslau.

The people who emigrated were primarily country folk. One survey indicates that one group was made up of 410 rural landowners, 84 land tenants, 248 farm workers, 431 artisans and 54 that worked in the cities. Most of them had little money and could barely afford the trip with little left to start in a new land. Fortunately there were also a few well-to-do immigrants that helped the others along when money was needed. Although most were uneducated and it seems illiterate, they all had a solid grasp of their religion and the reasons for leaving their homeland. At one time or another these immigrants were branded as mentally imbalanced, lazy, criminals, greedy or fanatical residents who would be no loss to the area should they decide to leave. Of course, this was not true and was made up by some of the government officials for their own reasons. In fact, some actual reports from the time said, "the emigrants are among the most orderly residents", and "the large majority of the emigrants have distinguished themselves through good conduct and honesty", and also, "they include a great number of irreproachable and upright subjects".

The idea of immigrating had been discussed as early as 1833, gaining limited traction. However, in May of 1834 Pastor Krause wrote: "It is clear that we must leave this land, which is bringing the wrath of God upon itself, if Prussia will no

longer tolerate the Lutheran church. We do not know, of course, where we will go. But we do know that the lord has prepared a place for us, still the immigration cannot take place until we have tried everything". Many clergy had not reached this point, but a group of Silesian parishes had indeed written to the king explaining that without change in his policy, immigration would have to be a consideration. So the debate continued amongst pastors, congregations and the government. There were a few families that made independent decisions to leave for America. One of them named Zungler, a cobbler from Breslau, settled in Buffalo with a few other families. In a letter, now known as the "Buffalo Letter", from October 6, 1835 he wrote to his relatives in Silesia. "Buffalo is a big city where one can make his living in many different ways. We worked on a railroad for the first few days and earned one dollar per day. A carpenter earns two dollars a day even if he hardly works. Everyone here eats white bread. There is a mill here which produces 200 tons of flour in 24 hours. Everyone goes to church on Sunday and it is quiet in town..... The day laborer here is better off than the land owner there". This letter was passed around many communities and became quite well known for its glowing descriptions of life in America. This letter's exposure caused many families that were on the fence to petition the government to immigrate during this time. Some applications asked for financial assistance as well as to be excused from mandatory military service. The government refused these applications with little explanation. At first, the king's officials left the decisions to the local leaders. Some of them granted immigration with two rules, one that the immigrants would never be allowed to return and secondly that anyone left behind would be provided with a written guarantee of shelter for any family members that would be staying in Prussia.

As the applications for immigration to Australia and America increased, the government formed offices within districts to deal with the larger volume and started to form standardized rules for these now called "separatists". Commissioners were appointed to oversee the process of handling the applications and interrogations. A sampling of questions that a potential immigrant would be expected to address went somewhat like this:

- 1 Name?
2. Did you sign the request for emigration permits because of an alleged danger to your faith?
3. Do you stand by your decision?
4. When do you plan to depart?
5. Are you able to produce clarification from city and district courts stating that no trial is pending against you, and that you are not involved in any investigation?
6. Are you able to provide certification from the royal criminal court stating that you are not involved in any criminal case?
7. Can you provide certification from the tax office stating that you are not involved in any tax dispute?
8. Can you provide a certificate from the magistrate stating that you have no debts?
9. Do you possess sufficient means to cover the costs of the trip to America?
10. When did you arrive at the decision to immigrate?
11. Who wrote the request for your immigration permits?
12. Where would you hold religious gatherings if your religion were allowed, and how would you pay your clergy?

In addition to these daunting and complicated steps, the commissioners portrayed the new countries in the bleakest manner possible and reminded the applicants that they would not be permitted to return at every opportunity. Even with all that was required in many commissioners' reports, the applicants had thought everything out and were well prepared for their interrogation. A sticking point for many of the immigrants was the estimated 45 Taler per person cost for the trip to America which most of them did not have. Many would explain that a pre-arranged loan of some type covering the sum would be obtained and that was usually sufficient to appease the authorities.

The accumulated requests from our general geographic area were presented to the king by Altenstein, the king's district official who had been assigned to deal with immigration issues in the nearby districts. The King rejected the applications saying that he was protecting the immigrants that would have been "dragged into the misery awaiting them in distant lands".

On January 2, 1837 the king issued a royal order continuing to harden his stance on the issues of separatism and immigration, describing them as products of the “sickness of the age”. He singled out the clergy as a particular problem and indicated that the police must investigate such persons and “use the means available including temporary incarceration” to maintain order. Of course, these orders were not received well by the general population and particularly those identified as separatists. So on April 3rd several people from the Klemzig area wrote to the king in response, “Our frequently presented pleas have borne no fruit, and our miserable conditions have worsened... We cannot join the Evangelical State Church under any conditions, even if we should die a thousand deaths”. Surprisingly the king made an attempt at reconciliation on April 18th by directing an aide to meet with the separatists and try to convince them of the error of their ways. These meetings did occur but did not change any minds. Finally, on September 2, 1837 the king issued a cabinet order which sanctioned the immigrations. Along with allowing the immigrations to occur, the king continued his program of trying to dissuade the separatists from leaving by convincing them of the error of their ways. This was to no avail as several ships full of immigrants lead by Kevel departed Hamburg bound for Australia in the latter part of 1837 and through 1838. The South Australia Company was heavily involved in the financial aspects of getting the Prussians to migrate to Australia. The company was very happy to contribute financial incentives even though an English company because they needed people in Australia and the Germans were viewed as perfect settlers. One of the directors, named Angus, had strong sympathies for the German Lutherans over his English counterparts. He considered the English extremely impulsive, but less persevering and thus less suited for actual settlement, whereas he felt the Germans were more suitable because of their tenaciousness. A daughter of Angus, on seeing the Prussians on the dock in Plymouth getting ready to depart wrote the following poem.

From depths of far Silesia, across the ocean bound
A little band of exile men lay in Plymouth sound.
No dreams of gold or of conquest, had lured them thus to roam
No pressure of hard poverty had urged them from their home.
They did but seek for freedom, to pour their prayers to heaven.
To harken to the word of God, that freedom was to given.
Then as one man the people, followed their pastor forth,
Dearer one atom of God's own truth then all most dear on earth.
In the same spot where long ago the Pilgrim fathers lay
They stood for God and conscience sake, as resolute as they.
And tears from young and aged, fell thick as summer rain
And eyes wept sore with thankfulness, that had not wept for pain.
Behind the storm is sunshine, as though no storm were near,
In God's good time, who knows how soon,
That sunshine shall appear.

The trip to Australia was mostly uneventful and they landed in Adelaide. One of the passengers, Fiedler, was a game warden in Prussia so was a keen observer of the fish of the sea and birds of the air on the voyage. Whales, sharks, and flying fish were often spotted. Several Albatross were caught and plucked and Fiedler made tobacco pouches from their skin. Pastor Kavel held services every Sunday and also held daily school classes for the children in both German and English. The German settlements there turned out to be great successes. Both the immigrants and the existing English government got along well and joined together to improve and prosper South Australia. (to be continued...)

Found in the Files

The Wienke Family



The Albert and Mathilda Wienke Family (Reinhard is standing third from right)

Front Row (seated) L-R

Elizabeth Wienke-Jagow, Mathilda Retzlaff Wienke, Albert Wienke, Adelaide Wienke Schmeicle

Back Row (standing) L-R

Evelyn Wienke Conrad, Hugo, Adolph, Esther Wienke Moll, Albert, Ella Wienke Eggert Reinhard, John, Emma Wienke Haseley

Here are some recollections of the people pictured above by Carolyn Chapin, granddaughter of John Wienke.

JOHN WIENKE (my grandfather) - He was married to Marie Nantke Wienke and together they had eight children - Herbert (my father), Mildred, Florence, Lorraine, Erwin, Edward, Nelson & Richard. John worked at Myers Lumber Company in No. Tonawanda. John spent many Sunday afternoons in the summer sitting under the chestnut tree in his backyard drinking a glass of beer listening to his favorite baseball team, the Cleveland Indians. He became blind in his later years and was a resident at the Niagara Lutheran Home where he died at the age of 86.

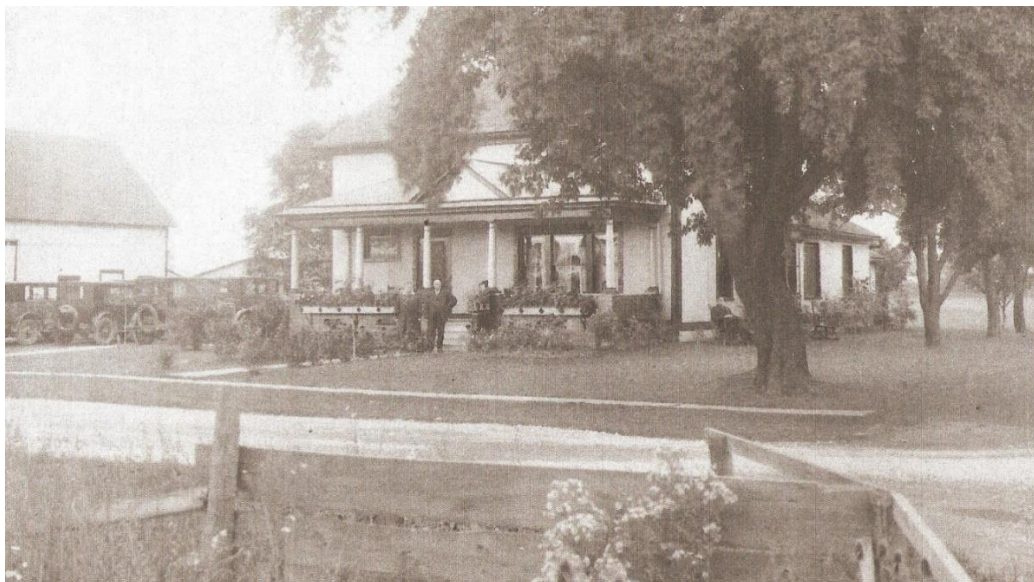
EMMA WIENKE HASELEY - After Grandma Marie died in 1939 at the age of 47 of ovarian cancer, Aunt Emma, a widow, came to live at the Wienke household taking care of the family for the next 11 years. She was an excellent seamstress making and repairing clothes for many family members.

ESTHER WIENKE MOLL - Aunt Esther came to our home to take care of me and my brothers when my mother Eleanor gave birth to my sister Janelle in 1948. She was a cook at the Bergholz Firehall restaurant for many years and was famous for her delicious pies.

REINHARD WIENKE - Uncle Reinhard owned and operated the Wienke Electrical store in Bergholz along with his wife Aunt Gertrude where they sold appliances and TV's. I remember my Dad purchasing our first television, a 21" console in the mid 50's. As an electrician, he along with his son Harold wired many houses in Bergholz. He had a love for flowers and had a beautiful rose garden which many people admired.

HUGO WIENKE - Uncle Hugo lived the longest of his siblings. He was a World War I veteran. While in the Army, he was exposed to mustard gas. In his later years, he developed lung cancer and died at the age of 97.

ELLA WIENKE EGGERT - Aunt Ella married Edward and they had one daughter, Margie. I remember going with my family to visit them in Gasport where they lived for many years.



Caption under the homestead photo: The Albert and Mathilda Wienke Homestead - circa 1920

The history of this structure and location goes all the way back to 1859 when Johann Salingre built a sturdy all-brick home at the south-east corner of Cayuga and Luther Streets. Constructed of locally fired, double course brick and designed in the Dutch style with a hearth and chimney at each gable end, it was the first and only brick home of its kind in Bergholz for over a century. In 1887 it became the homestead of the Albert Wienke family and is in the background of their family picture. This home still exists today and is the comfortable dwelling at 2492 Cayuga Street, although it now has stuccoed exterior walls and no chimney gables.

A Different Topic – The Buffalo Courier, June 9, 1895

Buffalo Courier.
BUFFALO, N. Y., SUNDAY, JUNE 9, 1895.

THE HOUSE OF THE FUTURE
The house of the future is a thing of the imagination. It is a house that will be built of steel and concrete, and will be as strong as a fortress. It will be a house that will be built of steel and concrete, and will be as strong as a fortress. It will be a house that will be built of steel and concrete, and will be as strong as a fortress.

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COURIER BICYCLE CLUB
The Courier Bicycle Club is a thing of the imagination. It is a club that will be built of steel and concrete, and will be as strong as a fortress. It will be a club that will be built of steel and concrete, and will be as strong as a fortress. It will be a club that will be built of steel and concrete, and will be as strong as a fortress.

FIRST RUN BUFFALO TO NIAGARA FALLS
The first run from Buffalo to Niagara Falls is a thing of the imagination. It is a run that will be built of steel and concrete, and will be as strong as a fortress. It will be a run that will be built of steel and concrete, and will be as strong as a fortress. It will be a run that will be built of steel and concrete, and will be as strong as a fortress.

HIS FIRST DAY OFF.
Tonsorial Artist as a Gentleman of Leisure.
HE WON'T WORK SUNDAYS.

The Courier Cycling Club's First Trip. – A Day on Wheels

BUFFALO TO THE FALLS.

And Every Sunday During the Summer the Courier Will Publish a Road Map and Description of a New Route.

It is in response to the unspoken demand of the 25,000 and odd wheelmen of Buffalo that the Courier begins this morning, the publication of a series of Illustrated articles on the bicycle roads of Erie County. Every interesting town, Village, and summer resort within easy riding distance of Buffalo will be visited the members of the Courier staff, with a view to finding out which are the best roads and routes in the county. If there are several ways of getting to a place, the Courier will try to find the best way, and give to its readers the benefit of its investigations. The nature and character of the roads from the wheelman's point of view will in all cases be carefully Indicated. The results of the bicycle tours conducted by the Courier will be published in as complete a way as possible, and it is better that strangers as well as wheelmen in the city and towns will find them a valuable guide in their own summer Jaunts.

"All aboard for Niagara Falls!" The Courier sketch artist gave vent to the familiar old cry as a sort of war whoop. And, jumping upon his light 20 pound roadster (which, by the way, he sold for scrap iron after the trip,) he started off at a brisk pace from the Courier office, bidding the reporter to follow. Now the reporter is not in any sense of the word a scorcher. He is one of those wheelmen you frequently meet of an afternoon, slowly and cautiously picking his way through an empty street expectantly waiting to get "run down." But on the trip in question he had one of those mounts which remind you of a swallow, so light and airy and chipper are they. And catching the inspiration of the occasion from the knickerbockered knight of the brush who was at once the Ulysses and the Nestor of the expedition, he threw care and caution to the winds, and bowled bravely along the Main Street asphalt, shooting in and out of the way of carriages and pedestrians, and grazing the "cow catchers" of trolley cars innumerable. The perilous part of the journey, however, was short. Up Main Street to Niagara then down three blocks to Delaware Avenue, and the reporter breathed again. From here the route is out Delaware Avenue on a straightaway asphalt surface to the city line, a distance of six miles— exactly six and one eighth miles from the Courier office. There is indeed one break in the asphalt for the distance of a few yards only, just as you reach the Chapin Place at the end of a downward slope. But the road will not be lost if the rider goes on one side or the other of the grass plot, strikes the asphalt on the opposite side, and continues straight ahead, due north. As the "Courier Cycling Club" crossed the Park Bridge, four miles from the Courier office, the artist "let up" on the crazy pace he had been setting. The bewitching scenery had caught his eye, and the reporter was glad of it, for it gave him a chance to breathe. Quickly dismounting the sketch man unrolled his kit, and selecting a favorable point of vantage was soon at work. A few bold pencil strokes of the trained hand, and the scene began to take living form on the paper. In a few minutes the work was completed, and the Courier Cycling Club was on the move again.

The asphalt ends at the city line. It is here, also, that Kenmore begins. Without a moment's delay the Courier riders sped through the town, and onward over the brick pavement, five miles in extent, to Tonawanda. It was on this fast boulevard that the little Billee of the Courier Club asked to try the reporter's wheel to satisfy himself once for all about a point which had been worrying him ever since the start was made, viz.: "Which wheel was the faster?" Of course, the scribe accommodated him, and a temporary trade was effected. Little Billee went along cautiously at first to get his bearings—or at least to get the hang of the wheel bearings. Then he "lit out." He went along like a tornado or an express train, 'faster than ever light unwove the meshes of darkness." The other half of the cycling contingent was rolling along easily, and watching the rapidly receding form of his companion, when lo! the wheel was seen to jump at least a foot in the air, and coming down to wobble as if it had a fit of the ague. It acted just as a kicking broncho would have done under similar circumstances. "Littlebillee" hung on to the handle bars for his life, and succeeded in maintaining his equilibrium.

When an inventory was taken it was seen that the saddle had dropped down, causing the trouble. Five minutes sufficed to repair the damages, and the Club was again en route, each man on his own wheel. But Little Billee now admits frankly that frankly, the other wheel is the faster. It is just 11 miles from the Courier office, Buffalo, to Tonawanda—a superb boulevard, six miles of asphalt, and five of brick. The route into the town follows the street car tracks to the bridge and into the main business street. A stop is here made for dinner, after which the club is again on the road. The main street of the town is the river road. The direct route to the Falls is along this thoroughfare. In the outskirts of the town on the northern edge, a very pretty view is obtained of Niagara River, and of the great shipping and lumber interests of the place. The road now begins to get bad. It is rough, and full of stones. But fairly good time is made. The wheelmen go past the New York Central Station at Gratwick, which looks like a flagman's shanty, so small is it. and on until the route branches off from the river road. Not that it is necessary to leave the river road at all. But as the latter is cut up by the laying of the trolley tracks, the Courier cyclists determined to test the route taken the the coach "Red Jacket." This road runs parallel with the river, and about two and a half miles back in the country. The river road was left at a point just a mile and three quarters from the Sheldon House, Tonawanda. The turning point is about 175 yards south of the tree which is seen in the accompanying cut of the "River Road near Gratwick. It will be readily recognized by anyone who travels along the route. It is necessary to be thus explicit, as to the directions, because several roads running in a northeasterly direction branch off from the river in this neighborhood, and much time will be saved to the cyclist if he takes the right tone. A touch of genuine country is now to be had. The route lies through long rows of apple trees on each side of the road, and a little farther inland are the open fields. It was a scorching hot day, and the sun now beat down upon the riders most unmercifully. The best that can be said of the road would not count for much before the County Supervisors. It was so choked with sand and finely powdered dirt that the pneumatic tires were often buried in it. And every now and then a hidden snag would be struck in the shape of a jagged stone or boulder. It was just the kind of road that loves to amuse itself at the expense of thin

tires, but luckily for the Courier Cyclers no punctures interfered with their trip. Leaving St. Johnsberg considerably to the right, the wheelmen rode to the turn, and going to the left, made straight for Bergholz, about three and a half miles farther on. The road continued bad for nearly the entire distance to the latter place, and at particularly rough places it was necessary to dismount and walk the wheels through the thick dirt. It was while toiling through one of these sand holes that a stop was made while the artist sketched the pretty farm house shown in the accompanying cut. It is exactly 18 and 1/2 miles to Bergholz, and the road from the Gratwick turning point, a distance of about six miles, had been almost uniformly bad. To add to the other discomforts, an unruly wind was blowing, and it continually swept up the dust and blew it into the eyes and nostrils and lungs, in a most disagreeable and unmannerly way. Bergholz is a country village of pretty appearance, and prettily situated. The road winds in and out of the town in a particularly charming fashion. Almost as many church steeples were to be counted as people when the Courier's riders passed through the village. A stop was made long enough to wipe some of the dust out of the eyes, and to wash it out of the throat with a gulp of water, and the journey was continued. The road from this point improved perceptibly. It was rough, indeed, but hard and firm, and the dust nuisance was not so noticeable. It is a scant two miles to the Military Road, and the trip is delightful all the way, as the road lies past a creek where the scenery is exceedingly picturesque. The sketch artist obtained two views along the way which are here reproduced. The first was taken at a point about a mile beyond Bergholz. The turtles and the frogs were much in evidence, and the artist caught a few of them—with his pencil. The second is at the junction of the Niagara Falls and Military Road. The best road is the direct one. The rider who is looking for the best bicycle route from Bergholz to the Falls will keep to the direct road, and not turn off toward the river at all. This will bring him into the main road that connects Lockport with Suspension Bridge. On reaching the latter road he will of course turn to the left. This is a longer route than the other, but the roads are much firmer, and better suited to bicycling. The Courier riders made both trips. Of the second road, enough is said when it is stated that probably a worse one was never traveled over. It branched off to the left of the Bergholz Road just beyond the Military Road, where the creek makes a sharp turn. All the ills that were experienced on the Gratwick and Bergholz road were experienced here in an intensified degree. The roadbed was dirtier and more sandy, the ruts were deeper, and the hidden boulders and sharp stones were more numerous. But all things have an end, and in a comparatively short time the wheelmen had traversed the six miles which lie between the turn of the Bergholz road and Niagara Falls. Leaving the Driving Park on the left, they entered the Falls at Pine Avenue. The route then was down Pine Avenue to Main Street and to the Niagara Falls branch of the Courier office. One thing should be said of the trip to the Falls by way of Bergholz. It was undertaken in a dry season, when the roads were particularly bad for wheelmen on account of dust. Probably the road will improve after a heavy rain. But the Courier would not recommend it to its wheelmen as a Niagara Falls route in a dry season. The return trip was made by way of Echota and La Salle. The river road if was followed all the way to Tonawanda. Leaving Falls Street, the street car tracks were followed out of the town. The route lay directly past the Central Station of Echota. A little way farther on could be seen the deep cuts in the road where the trolley line was being built. It would seem that here the trip would have to end, so far as that particular route was concerned. But no. The riders managed to find very good wheeling on one side or the other of the road. It was rough and "joggy," of course; but there was little or no dust, and no sand. It was not what would be called a fast road. Nobody would think of "scorching." But all things considered, it was much to be preferred to the road leading through Bergholz. No specific instructions are needed for following this route. Coming into La Salle, the road curves sharply through the town and then continues in its original direction, keeping pretty close to the river. In fact, the river can be seen during most of the journey. If any further instructions are needed, the rider has to bear in mind that he is to follow the road which is cut up by the operations of the electric road builders. The distance along the river road is just about four miles shorter than the distance via Bergholz.

Memories (From our board member Martha Haseley) This beautiful, short childrens' prayer was often prayed at the beginning of a trip. Aunt Eleonore Craft would say in Platt Deutsch: "Noo viff muh ayast behn," (Now, let's pray first.) It was always comforting way to begin. A quick Google search shows that this prayer is still included in today's German children's prayer books. In one site the following prayer was used to wish school children a good school year.

Im Namen Gottes fang ich an,
 Mir helfe Gott der helfen kann,
 So Gott mir hilft, wird alles leicht,
 Wo Gott nicht hilft, wird nichts erreicht.
 Drum ist das Beste, was ich kann:
 Im Namen Gottes fang ich an.

I begin in the name of God,
 God, who is able, will help me,
 Where God helps me, all will become easy,
 Where God doesn't help, nothing will be accomplished,
 Therefore the best that I can do:
 I begin in the name of God.

Upcomming Events –

Nov.General Meeting – 11/8/21, Wheatfield Community Center, **7:00 PM**

Dec. Christmas Carol Sing – St. Peter's Lutheran Church, Walmore. 12/10/21, 7:00 PM

Der Brief is published quarterly by the Historical Society of North German Settlements in Western New York, Das Haus und Der Stall German Heritage Museum, 2549 Niagara Road, Niagara Falls, New York 14304. (716) 795-2890. We are a 501 c 3 organization. Email address: dashausmuseum@gmail.com, web address: www.dashausmuseum.org. © All Rights Reserved. The editor and President of the Historical Society is John Schultz. John Milleville is Vice President, George Camann is Treasurer, Martha Haseley is the Secretary. Other board members are June Stenzel, Dianne Retzlaff, Dorthy Kew, Ruth Camann, Don Schroeder, Cindy Sileo, Richard Williams, Justin Higner, Ruth Voelker, Lois Wiseman, and Elaine Timm.

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The Historical Society welcomes new members! If you find our newsletter and our mission interesting we hope that you will make a membership contribution and join us. Our mission is to educate adults and children concerning the heritage of the nineteenth century settlements of North Germans in western New York, and thus to preserve that heritage. We do this by preserving the history, artifacts, documents, manuscripts, publications, photographs, Plattdeutsch anecdotes, crafts and customs of these hearty immigrants, their descendants and the communities in which they lived.

We maintain Das Haus und Der Stall German Heritage Museum, sponsor an annual dinner, hold informative monthly meetings with special speakers, offer for sale books and other items published by the Society, and distribute Der Brief, our quarterly publication to 29 States and 3 foreign countries.

If you would like to become a member of our society, please fill out this form and send it to the address indicated.

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