

# Chapter 6

## West To Cappeln

Subjects considered for this Chapter are located within a narrow band extending due west from New Melle, through the village of Cappeln, and to the Warren County line.

Articles are as follows:

- 6.1 Molitor's Bouillon
- 6.2 St. John's Church.
- 6.3 Berlekamp Reunion.
- 6.4 Trains.
- 6.5 Charles. A. Tidd
- 6.7 Doebelin School Days
- 6.8 The Hammels.
- 6.9 Cappeln Founder.
- 6.10 Ferdemann Cemetery
- 6.11 Cappeln Blacksmith.
- 6.12 Early School Days.
- 6.13 Cappeln Teacher Audrain.
- 6.14 Centennial Farms

6.1

### MOLITOR'S BOUILLON

For years the Molitors of New Melle have had the tradition of calling the whole clan together for a feast from the 30-gallon kettle. It is quite a clan, to be sure, and the 30 gallons of chicken bouillon is never too much. There are Mary Ann, Sonny, Buddy, Bobby, Glennon, Betty, Richard, Michael, Florence, Bill, Jane, Loretta and Connie; their husbands and wives; and their children. In all it adds up to 61 plus. They were all present at the family homestead on New Year's Day for this annual event, and I arrived for a story in time to stand around the blazing open fire in sub-zero weather with the brothers, to taste the steaming brew at various cooking intervals for proper seasoning and serving readiness. I asked what was in the stew, and Sonny quickly replied "just about everything, with old hens as the base, and that it wasn't a stew, it was 'bouillon'." Well, bouillon, according to Webster, is a clear seasoned soup made usually from lean beef. Nevertheless, this particular dish is known as "Molitor's Bouillon," and it is delicious.

The important thing however, about this event is family togetherness. One doesn't have to be around the Molitor family long before you sense the closeness for each other. They all manage to get together five times each year. Today when so many families are drifting farther and farther apart it is refreshing to hear about the exceptions.

I walked through the large frame home on Highway D, one mile west of New Melle where the late August and Florence Molitor raised their large family. They had purchased the home in 1945 from Mr. and Mrs. Fritz Gorman, but the home goes much farther back than 1945. The boys pointed first to a name and date clearly scratched on an east side glass pane. It read "Herman Landwehr Jan. 7, 1900." He was the son of J. H. Landwehr who purchased the property in the late 1800's. Mr. Landwehr came from Germany in 1873 as a skilled



# New Melle

*"From The Cracker Barrel News"*

stone and brick mason. The house appears though to have been built as early as the 1860's. Without further investigation it was apparently built by F. D. Bosse as shown by a small black square on Page 10 of the 1875 St. Charles County Atlas. His close neighbors at the time were Theo. Borberg, J. Koehler, C. Tieman, and John Holtman.

No. 157 JAN. 5, 1977

6.2

**ST. JOHN'S CHURCH**

(1833)

the first Evangelical and Reform Church west of the Mississippi was founded in Femme Osage. Their first pastor, Herman Garlich, found it necessary to establish one of his preaching points in a farmhouse near Cappeln, where in 1839 the St. John's Church in Cappeln was founded.

One member of this stalwart group donated a tract of land for a church site, where in 1840 a log church with two windows on each side was erected.

This small log church served the congregation until the present rock construction was completed in 1865. This charming little German church standing in the center of an oak grove has changed only slightly over the years and the setting becomes more precious to preserve with each passing year

Readers who are not acquainted will find it midway between New Melle and Chappeln a few hundred feet off Highway D/

The church was built with great difficulty between 1860 and 1865 due to the Civil War.

Settlers in New Melle of the E. and R. faith drove their wagons to St. Johns to worship until 1904 when the Deutache Evangelische Friedens Germeinde of New Melle was formed. The present church in the south part of town evolved from a store building remodeled by carpenter Ernest Sudbrock. Other remodeling and expansion programs followed. Thus, for three quarters of a century Friedens has served the people well.

NO. 128 APR. 5, 1976

6.2

**THE PARSONAGE**

Long years ago Christian churches, one by one, adopted the policy to provide and maintain a dwelling place for their pastor. He was known more so then than now, as "the parson." Consequently, his home was called "the parsonage." Generally it was located on the church property near the church itself for con-

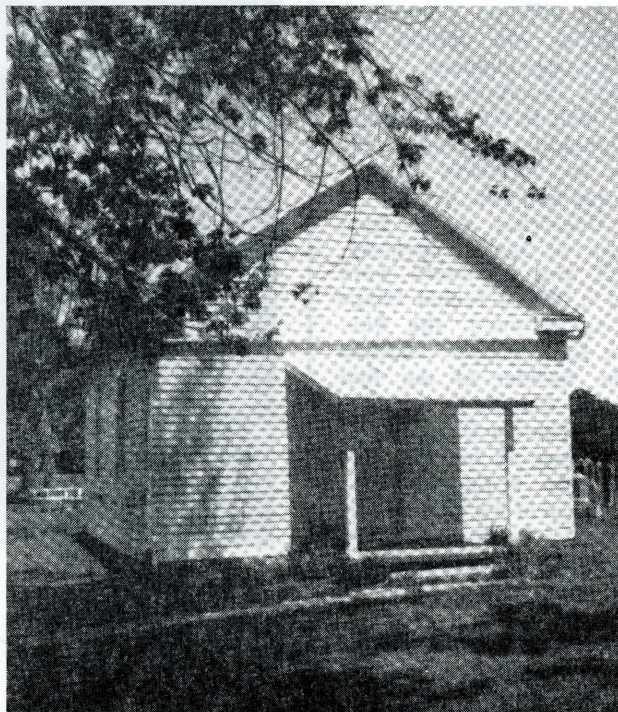
venience to him, and to members of his flock who may wish to visit him at any time of the day or night, seven days a week.

However, as telephones and automobiles became more widespread, the need for this was lessened, and so, many of the ministers today prefer to live a fair distance away from their church to guarantee some degree of privacy.

In the rural areas today we still have the majority of parsonages next to the church. So it is with Pastor Devon Jones and his wife Marilyn's home near the Cappeln U.C. of C. between Cappeln and New Melle.

Their home, which has served the families of several other pastors, was constructed in 1914, replacing the original. It was completely remodeled and modernized in 1956. On October 30 of this year, the exterior was completely repainted and trimmed in gray. It had not been painted since 1961. Adding to the charm of this pretty frame residence are decorative shutters that were designed and made by Pastor and Mrs. Jones themselves.

No. 57 NOV. 11, 1974



*St. John's German School*

6.2

6.3

### BERLEKAMP REUNION

When descendants become deeply intrigued with the history of their long departed ancestors, interesting things begin to happen. They look for old tombstones and restore them, they examine church records, construct complex family tree charts, and invite all the relatives over for a reunion.

This is precisely what happened when Mrs. Oscar Brakensiek (Emily) and other descendants of Fredrick and Elizabeth Berlekamp inspected family tombstones in the Cappeln St. John's Church cemetery. They needed considerable attention and when the work was done Emily thought of inviting everyone to the Cappeln Church Hall for a reunion. Thus, on Sunday, July 30, 61 people, most of whom were adults, gathered at the historic church grounds to honor the two German immigrants that had made it all possible.

In the meantime Emily, with her daughter Ina, got busy constructing a four-foot square genealogical chart in colors to define the different generations and families. We counted 309 direct blood line relations.

Fredrick Berlekamp was born Jan. 26, 1825, in Wester Kappeln, Kreis Tecklenburg, Prussia. His wife to be, Elizabeth Lydenghaus, was born Feb. 11 1821, in nearby Onesbruck, not far from the town of Melle, Germany. Fredrick and Elizabeth were married in 1851 at Femme Osage by, it is believed, the Rev. Herman Garlichs. Mr. Garlichs was the founder of the first Evangelical Church in America, located in Femme Osage. Fredrick, a farmer all his life, died Jan. 22, 1866, in Cappeln, Mo., the namesake of his home in the "old country." Elizabeth also died in the same month of her birth in 1917, and is buried in Napoleon, Mo.

The original home place of this immigrant couple is shown in Section 33, TS 46 N., Range 1 E, in the 1875 St. Charles County Atlas. It is one mile west of New Melle. Their log home burr'd

and a frame home was built on the existing foundation. It is now the property of Ralph and Lydia Nieweg. During the afternoon of the reunion, all guests drove to the site.

No. 233 AUG. 9, 1978



*St. John's Church of Cappeln*

6.3

6.4

3/23/77 TRAINS

Bill Tidd, an early retiree from Laclede Gas Co. and now a gentleman farmer, has just completed building a beautiful new home two miles west of New Melle, and in his large, comfortable basement there is a magnificent model railroad train set up that brings him a bit closer to his boyhood dream of becoming a railroad engineer.

Born on a big ranch in Wyoming, and a son of an expert, hard-riding cowboy, Bill could only dream of the romance of railroading in his younger days. Later in World War II it was necessary that he give full attention to flying dangerous missions out of Italy as a gunner in B-24s, the Flying Coffins. Finally, however, he and his wife Cleo settled in St. Charles near the Katy tracks where he could daily observe the details of railroading. Years later the Tidds purchased a farm west of New Melle where their new home is located (see "Tidd's Barns" in the Cracker Barrel News Issue No. 123 dated March 1, 1976), and established a real estate office in New Melle.

Four years ago, when Bill was recuperating from a severe illness, Cleo acquired for her husband an old American Flyer model train set complete with tracks, locomotives, an assortment of cars, and a transformer. Thus began a hobby that has grown into an exacting display of miniature trains. His electrically separated model train complex is assembled on a raised plywood platform 9 feet wide by 24 feet long, plus a side extension for a 2-foot long suspension bridge.

Here he has the American Flyer "collectors set," and a Lionel set, on four tracks on the flat, two elevated tracks, and the control center for correction, for regulating speed, and for "blowing the whistle." In the center is a farm lot, a log cabin, and power line.

As we watched the heavy locomotives pull their string of box cars and caboose, and another train with lighted coach-

es, we pondered over the history of railroads.

Men of all ages, and women too, have been fascinated by trains ever since the first iron horse puffed its way from city to city in the industrialized eastern part of the United States, and later when it first rolled across the plains to California to link the wild west with the tamed east.

The first railroad on a raised track was the Granite Line built in Massachusetts in 1826. It primarily was constructed to bring granite to the Bunker Hill Monument site. Cars were moved by gravity and by a team of horses. In 1830 the Baltimore and Ohio opened a 13-mile track. The Mohawk and Hudson, and the New York Central followed in the same year to give the country 23 miles of railroad. Five years later there were 1098 miles, and by 1848 the country had 5,996 miles. A peak of 254,037 miles was reached in 1916. Since then there has been a decline to about 220,000 miles, however, the railroads are still a major form of transportation, and most of the famous lines remain in operation. What a spectacle it must have been during the St. Louis World's Fair in 1904 at Union Station when hundreds of thousands came here and departed. Passenger cars from all corners of the U.S. were backed up in the yards as far as one could see, and lines of travelers stood before each of the huge iron gates. It was the time when railroading was the economic backbone of this country, and nearly every family was affected by the giant industry in some way. Here we are most familiar with the Wabash to the north, and the Missouri-Kansas and Texas railroad running along the Missouri River. Towns like Foristell, Wentzville, Hamburg, Defiance, Matson and Augusta were our own neighboring towns that owe their early existence to the railroads. Many of us have been charmed by the engineer when he blew the whistle to signal the oncoming fast express, or by the long freight with boxcars bearing the names of major lines from far away places.

Modern rails evolved from the old wagon ways, or tramways, when as early as the 16th century

planks were laid down in parallel lines over logs to enable draft horses to pull loads of rock and coal easier and faster. Later, when iron wheels were used, strips of iron were secured to the planks. Cast iron rails were first made in 1767 in England and flanges were added to the wheels. The manufacture of steel rails began in the U.S. in 1865, however, much trouble resulted from "transverse fissures" which created weak spots. This was corrected when controlled cooling and close inspection was introduced. The first rails were only in 3-foot long sections, and each connection was the weakest place. So, rails were made longer. Now each rail is 40 feet or more and joints are butt welded carefully to completely eliminate any weak places for ultimate safety. Ties too have evolved from crude logs to uniform timbers, and the use of preservatives has increased their life from five to 30 years. Also, the track bed has changed from earth and cinders to crushed stone.

We focused our attention on the miniature streamlined passenger cars. The modern, full size cars seat at least 60 passengers. They are constructed of lightweight alloys and mounted on two four-wheeled swiveling trucks. They are air-conditioned, virtually sound proof, and beautifully furnished. They are certainly a far cry from the 15-foot long by 7-foot wide passenger car we often see in wild west movies. These old cars were virtually stage coaches on wheels. The world's first sleeping car, with tiers of berths only on one side, was introduced in the U.S. in 1836. In 1859 George M. Pullman converted two Alton Railroad coaches into sleeping cars, and the concept is basically the same today. Freight cars have also changed greatly. The box type freight car, for instance, had a capacity of 10 to 15 tons. Today the capacity is 50 tons, and coal cars may have a capacity as high as 120 tons.

That little caboose trailing on behind has remained very much the same. It provides shelter and conveniences for the train crew, and the glassed-in cupola projecting from the roof permits the crew to survey the entire train.

6.4

Engineer Tidd blew the whistle as one of the powerful and expensive midjets raced toward a bend at the far end, and so we thought awhile about the evolution of railroad locomotives. They were all steam driven and fired with wood, and later coal, up to 1925. The first practical locomotive was constructed in England in 1804 by Richard Trevithick. It proved how efficiently smooth wheels could operate on a smooth track, and its method of exhausting the steam into the smokestack, which in turn provided a forced draft for the fire in the firebox, continued to be employed on all subsequent steam locomotives. The first practical steam locomotive was the Rocket, built by the English engineer George Stephenson. It could pull a load three times its own weight at 12 mph. Soon after that though the Americans developed highly efficient engines, but some of us can still remember the coal soot and smoke that poured out of the stacks and into the open coach windows. In 1925 the first Diesel-electric was introduced, and the first passenger train diesel unit was placed in operation in 1934. Before World War II there were 800 diesel engines and 40,000 steam locomotives in use. By 1957 there were 25,000 diesels, and the old steam locomotives were becoming museum pieces.

The hour was late, and the engineer blew the whistle once more. We had come to the end of the line.

No. 167 MAR. 21, 1977

6.5

#### CHARLES A. TIDD

Charles A. Tidd was born July 24, 1920, on his father's ranch in the north central part of Wyoming near Buffalo, just east of the Big Horn Mountains. Here, in this historic Buffalo Bill and Gen. Custer territory, Tidd grew up as a boy. Soon he was nicknamed "Bill," and more affectionately "Wild Bill." The warm, likeable western personality was to remain a characteristic of him throughout his lifetime, even though he left the ranch as a young man.

Bill moved on into Arkansas, and there met Cleo Curlin. They were married Nov. 13, 1941. He joined the Air Force during World War II and became a gunner on an Air Force B-24 bomber and participated in many dangerous missions in the European Theatre. On Aug. 6, 1944, his young wife received the following disturbing telegram, quote — "The Secretary of War desires me to express his deep regret that your husband, Sergeant Charles A. Tidd, has been reported missing in action three August over Italy. If further details or other information are received you will be promptly notified — ULIO The Adjutant General."

Wild Bill had survived, however, not only a forced landing, but also a 55-day ordeal in "no-man's land." When exhausted, starved and diphtheria-ridden Sgt. Tidd struggled into friendly territory and told of his thrilling escape from the Nazis all were astonished. It just could not have happened, but it did.

Note the article appearing in an Air Force publication: "Last August Staff Sergeant Charles A. Tidd, a gunner on a B-24, and the rest of his crew, were forced down in Northern Italy by engine trouble. They made a forced landing on a beach after two engines caught fire. After the bomber landed, the ten men split up into groups. Charles traveled with the bomber's radio operator. The five men who finally reached safety evaded German patrols scouring the countryside for them, and after a 55-day journey made their way to American occupied territory. They traveled the entire distance on foot, moving only at night and hiding in the homes of friendly Italians during the day. The Italians gave them food, and kept their location from the German soldiers who were searching for the men. Charles said that he and his companion lived on flour and water during the journey and added, 'It was all the people had to eat, but they shared it with us.' Charles, who has been awarded the Air Medal, began a 26-day furlough on Saturday, December 2, when he arrived at Jefferson Barracks

Reception Center No. 9."

Slowly Bill recovered but it left him with a rheumatic heart. Following the war, Bill and Cleo settled in St. Charles and he later retired from Laclede Gas after 20 years of service.

On April 25, 1966, the Tidds moved to New Melle. They bought the old Henry Hoefner farm north of Sneak Road, and Bill settled down to the land and horses he loved. (See "Tidd's Barns" in the Cracker Barrel News Issue No. 123 dated March 1, 1976.) He also appreciated the opportunity to develop an ideal habitat for wildlife. In 1975, his farm was one of six selected in St. Charles County to receive all necessary plants and aid for the preservation of wildlife. In the meantime Cleo settled down in the real estate business and opened her office in town.

Soon the Tidds became widely known, loved and respected. The war years, however, began to show its effect on Bill. After a severe heart attack four years ago he changed his pace and thereby realized partially a boyhood dream of becoming a railroad engineer by pursuing the model train hobby rather extensively (See "Trains" in the Cracker Barrel News Issue No. 167 dated Mar. 21, 1977).

Now Bill Tidd is dead at the age of 56, and all who knew him deeply mourn his passing. Death occurred suddenly on Tuesday, May 31, at his new one-year-old home on the farm. Besides his wife, Cleo, he is survived by his son and daughter-in-law, Charles and Kathy Tidd, and grandchildren, Tamara Ann and Traci Renee. Funeral services were conducted at the Schrader Funeral Chapel in Ballwin with the Rev. Charles Dunning, pastor of the New Melle Baptist Church, officiating.

Rev. Dunning chose John 14: 1-6 as his scripture text, and spoke highly of Bill as a man who was a dedicated Christian, a man who loved his church and family, and as a man whose warm western-style personality affected the lives of all who knew him.

6.4 & 6.5

### THE COUNTRY SALE

In the year of 1868 an adventurous young man of 18, by the name of August Brakensiek, boarded a sail boat from the shores of his native Germany for America.

A free and independent life awaited him in this land of unlimited opportunities. After traveling around the country he finally settled on an 80 acre farm in the Callaway Township, just two miles southwest of New Melle. He was at home here with many other German immigrants, some of which arrived 20 or more years earlier.

August grew to love the area and soon encouraged his parents and brothers to join him. This they did but the long journey across the ocean claimed the life of his mother. His father and brothers settled around him on other farm lands, and thus the Brakensiek family became entrenched in the local area where a number of descendants are to this day.

The 1875 Atlas of St. Charles County shows that August built his log cabin on the north edge, and near the center of the acreage. Here he lived with his wife Louise (nee Niederjohn) until his death in 1930.

Last Sunday, on a beautiful November day, Mrs. Clara Brakensiek conducted a typical County Sale on the old farmstead. Some degree of sadness is always attached to a sale of this type, where once cherished possessions are sold to the highest bidder.

However, it is definitely part of our wonderful rural America, where the local folks hope to get a bargain on some useful farm tool, or household item, they don't really need; and where the antique buff hopes to find more collectibles, or primitives, or an occasional true antique (100 years old or more), for an already bulging collection; and where the local folks wonder what those city folks see in that "old stuff."

The auctioneer senses the excitement of competitive bidding building up as he and his team move along through the heaps of household articles, tools and

furniture spread out on the lawn. Long ago he has learned the art of tempting one bidder against the other with his entertaining repertoire. What would a public sale be without it?

It is also an event where the local Ladies Aid has an opportunity to serve the delicious hot beef sandwiches, homemade pies, and hot coffee, and St. John's this time is to be complimented.

So, considerable happiness goes along with the sadness, and the cherished possessions of one family, eventually become the cherished possessions of many other families. We should all be grateful for today's interest in nostalgia. If it were not so, countless thousands of beautiful and historical treasures of past generations would be destroyed.

The visit with Mrs. Brakensiek was a very pleasant experience. She, as Miss Clara Thilking of the Femme Osage area, married Edmon Brakensiek, a son of August, on June 15, 1924. Edmon was born in the original Brakensiek farm home, and like his father August, lived there until his death. He died on September 11, 1971. They were, and Clara still is, faithful members of St. John's U. C. of C. in Cappeltn.

Clara recalled her father-in-law as being an accomplished stone mason, and also a skilled butcher of hogs and beef cattle. He would leave home for several days and travel from farm to farm, possibly on horseback, butchering meat. Along with this work he was an active farmer, and as an item of interest, reference is made to the 1905 account book of Borgelt's Blacksmith Shop in Cappeltn.

Here are three full pages assigned to August Brakensiek listing farm tools bought, repaired and sharpened. The total cost of all items listed comes to \$25. The names of William and Henry Brakensiek are listed on other pages.

Clara also remembers her husband, Edmon, as a good farmer and family man, and especially mentioned his love for "coon hunting."

The Edmon Brakensiek's children, and daughters and son-in-law are Erich and Norma (nee Meury); Erwin and Joyce (nee Hueffmeier); and Wesley and Donna (nee Sherman) all of the New Melle area, and Ruby (Mrs. Raymond Schelton of St. Charles). They have always been a close knit family.

Parcels of the farm have been deeded over to each of the children by their parents, and their oldest granddaughter, Mary Christina (Christy) Ramey, with her husband Roy, are now renovating the old homestead for their new home. Clara is presently living with Erich and Norma.

6.7

### DOEBELIN SCHOOL DAYS

On the last day of a seven-month school term there would always be a basket picnic, that event the children had looked forward to weeks in advance. On that same day a professional photographer would appear with his simple box type camera and sensitized plates mounted on a tripod. The children from grades 1-8 would line up in rows with their teacher in front of their school house, as the photographer hid himself under the black hood and squeezed the magic rubber ball for the historic photo.

This was typical of all rural schools in the early 1900's, and Doebelin School on Oberhellmann Road, northwest of New Melle, was no exception. Mrs. Herman (nee Lydia Giessmann) Freese, now 82 years old, and residing on the Freese farm near Foristell Road, attended Doebelin School from 1902 to 1911. Lydia remembers many instances of her girlhood school days in rural Callaway County, and in a box of old photographs she found a photo of the 1906 class taken at the school picnic. It had been 72 years ago, but without hesitation she named all of her school mates.

Lydia was born Nov. 4, 1896, on a farm two miles from Doebelin School where her father, August Giessmann, had attended in 1866. When she enrolled in 1902, all 50 seats in the school were occupied. Like many other pupils, she could not speak English, and the public school would not allow any German to be spoken during school hours. This, of course, was a problem to overcome, but she learned the English language quickly and soon was "ciphering" at the blackboard in competition with the others, lining up on either side of the room in spelling matches, and reading out of the new Franklin Fifth Reader.

During recess, and at noon, there were such games as Stealing Sticks, Base, Ring Around a Rosey, Drop the Handkerchief, Hide and Go Seek, Ante Over, and Tag. When weather was bad they would often spread their

coats over desks and play marbles.

Lydia remembers a wood stove near the door with a large drum above it, and with two long benches on each side. If the children's feet were cold, permission was granted to take a book and sit close to the fire. Talking to classmates was not permitted. If caught, the punishment may involve taking a book and marching to the door to face it and study at the same time. Standing up in the aisle to study for a long period also discouraged anyone else from breaking rules. Another effective punishment was denial of that joyful recess.

Getting to school and returning home was not always pleasant either. Most of the time Lydia walked the two miles with satchel and lunch box. If weather was too severe she may be taken to school in either a buggy or sled. During heavy rains the creek may be too high to cross. The only recourse then was to go quite a distance further to a hanging bridge.

It was commonplace in those days to see grammar school students continuing on well into their late teens, or even until they were 21 years old. Lydia, however, was ready to graduate after the normal eight years. Not once though had she been told anything about grades. Finally, in her last year her teacher told her she would be ready to graduate if she passed a course in algebra and civil government. She did, and graduated in 1911.

While visiting with Mrs. Freese, it was an opportunity to review a bit of family history. Her grandfather Joseph H. Giessmann was born in Buer, Hanover, July 23, 1828, the son of John and Clara (Riske) Giessman, and one of six children. He spent his boyhood on his father's farm, received a common-school education in Germany, and when 18 years old he and a close friend set sail for America. After 45 days on a stormy Atlantic sea the boys completed their voyage from Bremen to New Orleans. They proceeded up the Mississippi to St. Louis, and thence to St. Charles County where Mr. Giessmann found work on the farm of George Brockmann in Callaway

Township north of New Melle. After a few months he worked for a Fred Miller and then was employed at a steam saw and grist mill of Frey and Doebelin, on Dardenne Creek. After eight months he developed severe chills and fever. He was cared for at the home of Fred Lohmann in Femme Osage Township. After regaining his health, he worked for a Dr. Krug for two years for \$40 the first year and \$6.00 per month the second year. We next find him driving oxen at the Schafgrist and saw mill near Marthasville (see C.B. News Issue 236 "Profile-Erna Haferkamp" Aug. 28, 1978).

Next he is a hired hand on Henry Knippen's farm, and then a blacksmith in New Melle for a year helping Mr. Schierbaum. The blacksmith shop stood on the southwest corner of Mill and Peters Streets. Our resourceful immigrant was once again hired by one of the local farmers before acquiring a farm of his own.

In September 1878, just 100 years ago, Mr. Giessmann married a German-born girl, and already a widow, Mrs. Wilhemina Hoehner. She was the daughter of Casper and Maria (Hagemann) Nieweg. These are details, of course, for the average reader, but it is interesting how so many of us only after we had enjoyed a thorough examination of that box full of early photographs, and another box full of "expanding star" quilt patches she is piecing together for another beautiful quilt.

No. 245 Oct. 7, 1978

6.7





1906 Doebelin School-closing day picnic: First row, from left: Emmet Giessmann \*, Alma [Holtmann] Berkemeier \*, Nelda [Holtmann] Goltzman \*, Theodore Brakensiek, Lottie Stroetker, Gustave Beier \*, Edward Mumm, Laura Tuepker \*, Otto Beier \*, Ella [Gosejacob] Brandes \*, Matilda [Minning] Mesker \*, Lydia [Niederjohn] Nieweg, Hattie [Niederjohn] Stratman \*. Second row: Amanda [Fienup] Stevener \*, Bertha [Holt] Almeling \*, Alfred Schulz \*, Elsie [Marsh] Freese, Rosa [Sanker] Schemmer \*, Elnora Minning, Emil Gosejacob \*, Emmet Minning, Dora [Brauksieker] Brandt, Julia Stroetker \*,

Robert Niederjohn \*, Lydia [Giessmann] Freese, August Mumm. Third row and fourth row: Selma Sanker \*, Daisy Sutton — teacher, Wilbert Holt \*, Dina [Freese] Brakensiek \*, Johanna Stroetker, George Brakensiek \*, Walter Marsh \*, Helena [Freese] Malzahn, Ida Niederjohn, Omar Niederjohn \*, Ben Freese \*, Olinda Marsh, Louis Gotermmann, William Fienup \*, Herman Freese \*, Bertha [Sanker] Wildschuetz, Theckia [Schulz] Borgmann \*, Laura [Kasten] Schmidt \*, Hugo Meier \*, name unknown, and Arnold Niederjohn \*. Asterisk indicates those deceased.

6.8

### THE HAMMELS

Dr. Arthur Gundloch, on land once belonging to the Gerdemanns, constructed a spacious weekend lodge in the 1940's. Main beams were cut from white oak on the site. It stands adjacent to the old Dublin School site on Oberhellmann Road northwest of New Melle. Three other families, the Ingrahms, Tempes and the Waterburys, owned the property before Bob and JoAnn Hammel from Weldon Spring took possession two years ago. Today it is one of the most charming homes in the locality.

A long drive, leading off Oberhellmann Road, bends around a private three-acre lake, meanders through the tall oaks, and circles in front of the neatly trimmed lawn that sweeps out from the home. There are many, many features about this home that could be described in detail, however, the predominant white interior, combined with an 18-foot ceiling in the long living room with an open balcony leading to the second floor bedroom is most outstanding.

I talked at length with JoAnn on the patio about the ancestry of her and Bob's families, as we were entertained by a tree frog from its home in a hanging basket. I was surprised to learn that JoAnn's paternal ancestors, bearing the original name of Schleiden, were natives of Westphalia, where Melle, Germany, is located, the namesake of New Melle. The Schleidens migrated to England and changed their name to Slayton. Records go back to 1545. The first records documented in the U.S. came from St. Peter's Church in New Kent County, Virginia.

JoAnn produced a 415-page documented history of the Slayton family prepared by Arthur Slayton of Whittier, Calif. It took him years to compile it. The volume includes many reprints of extremely old documents. Wills especially are classical examples of strong spiritual expression, with an equally strong attachment to earthly matters. Note the following 18th century will of

William Slayton from court records at Chatham, Va., quote: "In the name of God amen. I, William Slayton, of the County of Pittsylvania and State of Virginia, being very sick and weak of body, but of perfect mind and memory, but calling to mind, thanks to God for His mercy, the mortality of my body and knowing that appointed for all men once to die, do make and ordain this my last will and testament. That is to say principally and first of all I give and recommend my soul into the hands of Almighty God who gave it, and my body I do recommend to the earth to be buried in decent Christian burial, nothing doubting but at the general resurrection, I shall receive the same again by the mighty power of God, and touching such worldly estate wherewith it has pleased God to help me in this life, I give, devise, and dispose of same in the following manner and form —

"First, I lend to my beloved wife Nancy Slayton my land and plantation with my household and kitchen furniture freely and quietly, and be possessed by her during her natural life, and also my sorrel mare and grey mare's bay colt, with all my stock of cattle and hogs during her said life, etc...."

Note the word "lend," which was a strong deterrent to her remarrying, and a guarantee that his children only would inherit his estate. The ERA would have something to say about that today.

Bob's paternal and maternal grandparents were born in Germany. They immigrated to America in the late 1800's, and were very successful in their endeavors. Grandfather Phillip Schiffmann crossed the Atlantic at age 17. The sailing voyage required 32 days. He was a scholar, could speak seven different languages, and to satisfy his zest for learning he attended some school nearly every year of his long life.

Grandfather William Hammel became a successful banker, serving as vice president of the old Franklin Bank in St. Louis for many years.

Bob's principal source of livelihood is at the Chevrolet Plant in St. Louis. However, his abilities otherwise range from wise invest-

ments in property to an expert restorer of antique furniture. He is a perfectionist. JoAnn too, has that gift of orderliness in her life that comes as naturally as her pleasant personality and sparkling brown eyes. For a long time before her marriage she was secretary to the test pilots at McDonnell Douglas in St. Louis.

The Hammels have two children. Rann is a student at the University of Missouri-Columbia studying horticulture, and Resa is a student at Francis Howell High School.

No. 224 JUL. 7, 1978

6.8

# The Cracker Barrel News

## New Melle Area Items of Interest

By Bill Schiermeier

6.9

Issue No. 88

### Cappeln Founder

An interesting letter, with early Cappeln, Mo., historical material enclosed has been received from Alice Gerdemann of South Pasadena, Calif. Alice writes principally about her great-grandfather, Henry W. Gerdemann, who, if not the actual founder of the town of Cappeln, near the western edge of St. Charles county, he was certainly the most influential man in its early progressive years.

**Alice was born in the first old store building in Cappeln, which had been converted into a home. In 1910 her grandfather, H.T. Gerdemann, had a house built on the west side of the present brick store building, and it was her home until she and her brother moved to California in 1962.**

However her heart is still in Cappeln and she enjoys reading the news regularly of this area. Her parents were Charles and Ida (Schemmer) Gerdemann, who came to Cappeln in 1907 when her father started working in his father's store (H.T.G.), who in turn had taken over the business established by Henry W. Gerdemann.

The historical account which she has submitted is entitled "Early Cappeln History," was first prepared by her grandfather in 1924 and it compares perfectly with the account found on page 246 of the 1885 "History of St. Charles, Montgomery & Warren Counties, Missouri."

Another interesting reference is the 1875 St. Charles County Atlas, loaned to me by Mr. Borgelt of Washington, Mo., a former Cappeln resident. The Atlas on page 44 (Township 45 North 1 East, Sec. 5 and 6) shows the tiny town of Cappeln drawn in as described in the following article, and the names of other close by property owners. Note these original settlers — H.W. Gerdemann 360.26 acres, H.T.G., E. Lessman, Hy Brandes, H.W. & J.H. Schmitt, W.F. Schiermeier, E. Joerling,

Hy. Schuster, C. Fuhr, L. Wildschutz, Fritz Lamke, Hy. Brand, David Haman and C.F. Jaspering. All of these lived along the narrow trail winding through the Cappeln community.

The following account of Cappeln's early history is essentially the same as received from Miss Gerdemann:

"Heinrich Wilhelm Gerdemann was born in Wester-Kappeln, Germany Dec. 16, 1811, the son of J. Heinrich and Katherine Elizabeth Gerdemann. He received a good education in his native language at the common school of Wester-Kappeln. His father died in 1833. In this same year Heinrich and his younger brother John H. came to America. Their mother and seven children followed in 1838.

"Heinrich Wilhelm first located in St. Louis where he earned from 37 to 50 cents per day for manual labor. In 1837 he married Regina Elizabeth Schroer, - who came to America the year before from Germany. In 1839 the young couple moved to St. Charles county, and in 1841 opened a small store in the Femme Osage Valley about five miles from the noted Pioneer Daniel Boone's Home. In 1845, the year after the greatest flood ever known in the Missouri Valley, they moved to higher ground where they purchased 80 acres of land with a block house on it on the so called St. Charles and Marthasville Road. At once Henry erected a two-story building of dressed logs with a cellar, and it served as the first store in Cappeln for almost 40 years.

### Haul From St. Louis

At that time all supplies for the store had to be hauled from St. Louis by wagon, or rather for 15 years until the North Missouri Railroad (later the Wabash) was built through St. Charles county. Even the Marthasville Road was little more than a trail-nearly as old as the Boonslick, which was used extensively by stockmen along the Missouri river to drive their stock to St. Louis. An ideal team when roads were almost impassable was a yoke of oxen with a team of horses in the lead. It took 7 or 8 days to make a round trip to St. Louis. With a fine saddle horse, however, Mr. Gerdemann could make the trip of 50 miles in one day in all kinds of weather. He once crossed the Missouri river at St. Charles on horseback when the ice was 10 to 12 inches thick on the 11th

of March. This tends to prove the storeis of those old fashioned winters.

"There were no banks then outside of St. Louis and Mr. Gerdemann carried thousands of dollars annually in his saddle bags to St. Louis without being halted or interfered with once. By 1855 the North Mo. Railroad was completed to St. Charles so he rode his horse there and went by train to St. Louis.

"During the boating season on the Missouri river much heavy freight was shipped on river boats. Salt in large sacks, sugar in hogsheds, molasses, nails and whiskey in 10 barrel lots. Everybody kept some whiskey in the house as a remedy for snake bites. It only cost 15 cents a gallon, and retailed for 25 cents, and a 40 gallon barrel was \$8.00.

"In the early 1850's there was a heavy German immigration and Mr. Gerdemann piloted many of these groups to St. Louis and helped the new arrivals who could not yet speak English to secure Government land at 12 1/2 cents to \$1.25 an acre at the U.S. Land Office.

"Mr. Gerdemann gradually added to his land holdings until he owned almost 700 acres, and later reduced this to a 300 acre farm. The place is now known as the L.W. Amick farm. Hy. W. built a large two story house in Cappeln and along with his store business he engaged in farming. He had 12 horses and numerous cattle. The oldest store building stood close to the road and across the road on the turn was a log house occupied by Friederich and Heinrich Schemmer who also came from Wester-Kappeln, Germany. They were tailors in the old store. Their antique sewing machine was donated to the Missouri Historical Society in Jefferson City, Mo.

"Mr. Gerdemann and his neighbor, Mr. Kunze put up \$100, and another \$100 by other patrons to have a school. There was no Public School System then maintained by taxation. The teachers salary was from a pittance recieved from the sale of public lands — the 16th Section of every municipal township. The school term rarely exceeded six months. The 3 R's, Geography and History were all that was taught, and last but not least, a rod or switch for the boys was considered as essential in conducting a successful school as books and slates. The school house was of primitive log construction with the bark left on, and it had a clapboard roof. Benches, of course, matched the rough exterior.

6.9

"Mr. Gerdemann reserved two acres of land northwest of the buildings for a cemetery of which a plot 92 by 78 feet was enclosed with a fence. Here many of the early residents are buried in unmarked graves. There are only ten monuments. One grave is marked with cedar trees — One at the head and the other at the foot. The cemetery is filled with the exception of one row where there are two markers at the north end.

"A Post-Office was established in Cappeln in the first store in 1870, and according to U.S. Surveys it is the highest point in St. Charles county. A plug in the stone sill of the brick store building registers an elevation of 829 feet above sea level. (Note: now we have three places in the area that lay claim to the highest point).

Here in this original store in 1870, and later in 1880 when the large brick store was built, Hy. Gerdemann served as Post-master and continued until 1909 when the Rural Free Delivery from Foristell was begun.

"Mr. and Mrs. Gerdemann had five children: William F., Henry T., George H., August H. and Regina Elizabeth (Mrs. Hy. Karrenbrock). One of the sons, Henry T., better known as H.T., followed in his father's footsteps and kept the store going. For many years there was a large sign up over the front porch which read 'H.T. Gerdemann-General Merchandise Store — Established in 1845'. There were four beautiful large counters in the store with solid walnut tops. One can still be seen at Alley Springs in southern Missouri. The store did a thriving business in the Cappeln community for many long years when people came for miles around. Almost everything that people needed could be gotten there. It was especially well known for its large selection of yards goods.

"Heinrich Wilhelm Gerdemann passed away January 18, 1890, and his son E.T. died September 1, 1926. The store was then closed after doing business for over 80 years under 20 presidents from Palk to Coolidge.

*No. 88 JUN. 16, 1975*

*6.10*

### GERDEMANN CEMETERY

In the 19th Century and earlier it was common practice to establish private family burial grounds at some protected location on the family farm. Often the site would also provide a final resting place for nearby relatives and friends. Fortunately, there are many that still remain undisturbed in this far western section of St. Charles County, although they are generally neglected and nearly forgotten. In these tiny burial grounds are the remains of many of our earliest pioneers who braved a foreboding wilderness, and settled this land of ours so that we may have a better life today. Consequently, these sacred sites are really historical landmarks that deserve care and protection.

The Gerdemann Cemetery in Cappeln is one of the oldest family burial grounds in the vicinity, and Mr. Elmer Gerdemann of S. Pasadena, Calif., has supplied me with some very valuable information concerning the graves.

The earliest marked grave is that of Regina, Elizabeth (nee Schroer) Brandt, who died at the age of 31, on March 14, 1873. The next oldest marked grave is that of their infant son, August G. Brandt, who was born March 5, 1873, and died the same year on September 10. The other marked graves are as follows: Henry W. Gerdemann, Jr., — Oct. 3, 1874, at age 2; Gerhard H. Schroer — March 25, 1879, at age 67; his wife, Regina — June 27, 1890, at age 82; Hy. W. Gerdemann, Sr., considered the founder of Cappeln (Ref. Cracker Barrel News Issue No. 88, dated June 16, 1975), and one of the county's early settlers, postmaster and merchant, who was born Dec. 16, 1811, and died Jan. 18, 1890; his wife, Regina — Nov. 13, 1896, at age 78; H. T. Gerdemann, who carried on his father's business for fifty years, died Sept. 1, 1926, at age 80. He was the last to be buried in the family ceme-

70 ~~his wife~~, Mrs. A. B. Lessmann died July 6, 1918, at age 92; and their son, Fritz, on Aug. 4, 1922, at age 67. There were a number of other people buried here but they are in unmarked graves. The cemetery can be seen from County Road "D" just east of the old Gerdemann store, and to the rear a few hundred feet, and of particular interest are two tall cedar trees. These trees mark the head and feet of a small boy's grave by the name of Kunze. They were planted by his two playmates, Henry Karrenbrock and Wm. Lessmann, over 100 years ago.

*No. 126 MAR. 22, 1976*

*6.9 & 6.10*

## 6.11 Cappeln Blacksmith

Mr. and Mrs. Curtis Cannon of Wentzville stopped in to chat for a few minutes recently, and the conversation led into happenings of the past in Foristell and Cappeln.

Mr. Cannon started in the banking business in his home town of Foristell over 50 years ago, and later moved into the Wentzville State Bank where he is currently President. His wife Clara (nee Borgelt) was born and raised in Cappeln.

Both, therefore, are well known citizens in the area. Clara's father, J. Ed. Borgelt, opened his blacksmith shop in Cappeln in the late 1800's, following the trade of his father, Bill Borgelt. Grandfather Borgelt's brother, John, was also a blacksmith, who on Sunday, September 15 celebrated his 101st birthday. John continued as a blacksmith until he was 85 years old.

As we talked with Clara in the store, a sentimental tear came to her eye when she was shown a pair of blacksmith tongs once used by her father in the Cappeln shop. It was purchased at the auction there a few years ago.

An opportunity came this week to visit Clara's brother, Ed, in Washington, Mo. I located the "young" octogenarian on Fifth and Hooker, talking over old times with former New Melle resident, Ed Panhorst in Mr. Panhorst's Washington Sharpening Shop.

It was like turning the clock back. Ed Panhorst owned and operated the New Melle Mill many years ago. It was he that converted the mill over from steam to gasoline power. He reminded me that when he first converted from steam power he installed a brand new Anglo American short system flower mill, and pulled it with a "big oil engine."

He stated, too, that they made all of their own feed. To accomplish this, malt and other ingredients had to be shipped in by rail to Wentzville and hauled by wagon to New Melle.

The conversation on the early days continued at Mr. Borgelt's home, and a few historical treasurers were brought out from the files. One was the account book of J. Edward Borgelt, the blacksmith at Cappeln, containing accounts from 1905 through 1908. Each of his 43 customers are carefully indexed, and all jobs, regardless of how small, are listed. All work was charged during the entire year, and everyone "Paid In Full" at the end of the year.

Typical of jobs performed were: Fork put in handle, 10 cents; four shoes reset, 50 cents; plow sharpened, 15 cents; one hay frame, \$5.; buggy painted, \$7.50; two new and two old shoes, 75 cents; stove mended, 50 cents; four new buggy tires, \$8; shoeing Stallion, \$1.25; etc. throughout the book.

At such prices, even at that time, one wonders how the man could have ever made a living. It took years for a good blacksmith to master all of the required skills expected of him, and his work was hard, and generally under most uncomfortable conditions,

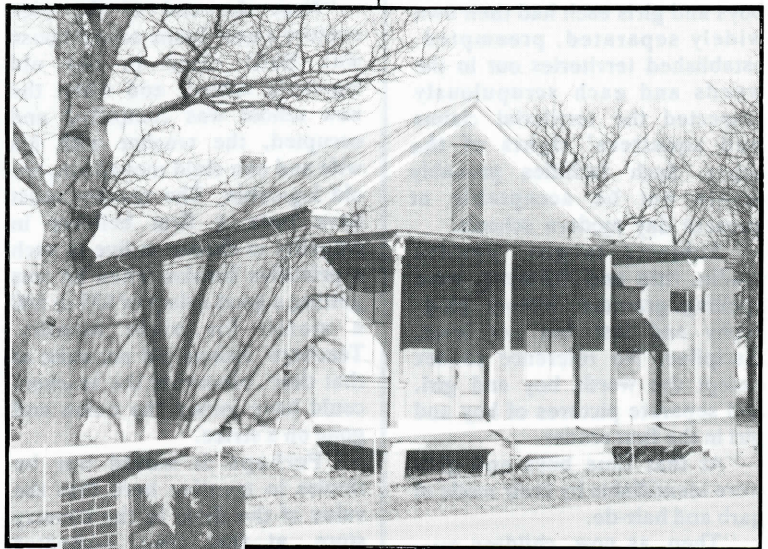
especially in the hot summer as he pounded a fire piece of steel in some desired shape.

I am sure that many of the older citizens living today can imagine they hear the familiar sharp pings of a heavy hammer beating a tattoo on an anvil as they pass by the closed shop in Cappeln.

Readers who may be interested in seeing an authentic old blacksmith shop should drive to Augusta and visit with Ed Holt. It would be a rich and rewarding experience.

Another historical treasure examined was an 1875 Illustrated Atlas of St. Charles County. It is worn and fragile but definitely a real classic. This old Atlas pre-dates the most commonly seen Atlas of 1906 by 30 years. Thus it will fill in many missing links of original New Melle history. These will be revealed in future articles. For instance, a table lists the 52 original male residents, their business, nativity, and when each came to the county, or rather, in New Melle. The earliest listed was Henry Abington, a farmer, who came from Virginia in 1830. All will be listed in future issues.

No. 49 SEPT. 25, 1974



Gerdemann  
General Store in  
Cappeln and  
A.J. Gerdemann

6.12

### EARLY SCHOOL DAYS

Soon September will usher in another school year for students throughout the country. Most will be entering costly, functionally designed, and fully equipped, but overcrowded school buildings. Each will have several teachers to report to, a series of classrooms to race to, a variety of modern subjects and techniques to plow through, and computerized statistics to measure up to.

It was not like this, however, in the early school days. A man, who many in the area know very well, but who wishes to remain anonymous, remembers his own boyhood school days of some 75 years ago, in the succeeding article he has submitted for publication. These are his words exactly as presented:

"The writer received his 'introduckshun' to 'edjukashun' in the school house described in the following article.

"The school house was a log structure with a lean-to woodshed attached to it, situated in a clearing in the woods and there were no other buildings; no cafeteria, no gymnasium, no — well — the boys and girls each had their own widely separated, preempted, established territories out in the weeds and each scrupulously respected the territorial claims and squatters' rights of the other. Such facilities probably would not be acceptable at present day modern schools.

"Subjects taught, besides readin, ritin and rithmetic, were spelling, grammar, history, geography and last but not least, discipline. No reference to sex except the words boy and girl, and separate pictures of boy and girl in the first reader.

"At that time boys and girls were identifiable by their mode of garb and hair-do.

"Then, as now, children wore patched clothes to school, but in those days clothes were patched neatly and yesteryear's grandmothers would have been hesitant to wear a nightgown adorned with such crude patchwork as that worn by youngsters today (copycats).

"Discipline mean obedience to, and respect for, those in authority. There were no juvenile courts in those days so in cases of juvenile misbehavior, parent or teacher assumed the roles of judge, jury and executioner. Hearings as to the guilt or innocence of the accused were brief for the defendant seldom had much evidence to offer in support of a plea of 'not guilty.' For a minor violation of the rules the defendant might get by with just a reprimand and a parole with an explanation of what the consequences would be if the terms of the parole would be violated. For a more serious offence the penalty, usually a paddle, or a switch vigorously applied to that part of the culprit's anatomy where it would best serve as a reminder the next time the victim chose to sit down. If no paddle or switch was readily available the palm of the hand served as an efficient substitute.

"Today, in our modern society, discipline seems to a great extent, to have been relegated to the scrapheap as just another one of those old fashioned, out-moded ideas that served no useful purpose, but today's statistics on juvenile delinquency and crime do not support that theory.

"Near the end of the 19th century a new frame school house was built close to the old log-cabin school, and when the new school was completed and occupied, the teacher with his wife and one child moved into the old log-cabin. The teacher must have been a firm believer in frugality to choose to live in such a primitive fashion when he was getting a good salary of \$35 to \$40 a month for eight months. Teachers' unions did not exist at that time, otherwise the teachers could have joined the union and gone on a strike.

"Perhaps it would not be remiss to mention here that the value of the dime in the country store, at that time, compares favorably with the value of today's dollar in the supermarket, but it was harder to acquire the dime than it is to get the dollar today.

"In those days there were not 'easy bucks,' 'fast bucks,' and all sorts of government doles and

handouts floating around for the mere effort of reaching out with the hand and grabbing a handful.

"Children received no weekly allowances for spending money but were allowed to help with the chores before and after school, and if some were reluctant to accept that allowance they were persuaded to do so anyway.

"During the winter months some boys who had a little spare time before and after school would set out a few steel traps, hoping to catch some furbearing animals, and thus acquire a few dimes for spending money. Sometimes a trapper would have the bad luck of catching one of those striped cats that roamed the countryside, and worse, would have the misfortune of becoming too closely involved in removing the catch from the trap and it was impossible to immediately destroy the evidence before the school bell rang. The story of his misfortune was known as soon as he entered the school room without a word of explanation.

"The common cold was as prevalent then as now. One of the home remedies was goose grease and turpentine spread on a flannel or woolen cloth, and put around the throat and neck of the patient. The remedy saved many perfect school attendance records.

"There were no compulsory school attendance laws at that time, so when farm boys were old enough to help with farm work they would often miss the first month or so of school in the fall, as well as in the spring. Thus, their 'book larnin' suffered, nevertheless, by the time they reached maturity they were well versed in the arts of diligence, thrift, self reliance, and the maintenance of a balanced budget, and that was a good education at a time when everybody had to paddle his own canoe."

No. 98 AUG. 25, 1975

6.12

## 6.13 Cappeln Teacher Audrain

Readers may recall the story about the early school days in a small one room school in Cappeln. Now Glenn Luetkemeyer, who has a farm near the Lake Sherwood entrance, comes forward with a long lost little black book written in long hand by the teacher. The contents consists of impressions and reflections of his years as teacher there after he had been told of his dismissal by the School Board. It is a precious bit of history that should be protected, and its contents recopied. The more interesting parts will be published in this and subsequent issues. Quote —

"It is my wish that this little book, with all its imperfections, be allowed a place in the library, so that the children, patrons, and others, that have such desire, may read its contents. Respectfully submitted by F. L. Audrain"

Two pages are devoted to a listing of the books in the school library. Note some of these classics — Swiss Family Robinson (5), Our Fatherland (6), Patriotism (15), Robinson Crusoe (33), Alice in Wonderland (41), Aesop's Fables (50), McGuffey's 4th Reader (2), and McGuffey's 3rd. Reader (11). How interesting it would be if some of these copies could be found.

Three pages are devoted to a listing of his pupils in alphabetical order, and the number of school days each attended. There you find such familiar names as Backhaus, Becker, Brandes, Borgelt, Brandt (8), Gerdeman, Manger, Neiwig, Reinhardt (6), Stratmann (5), Schuster, Steigemeir, and Wildschuetze (7). Teacher Audrain has something to say about each one.

A few examples are:

"Minnie Backhaus — Is a bright girl, well behaved, responsive and will learn fast if she attends regularly."

"Edwin Becker — Will probably not attend. However, I wish to record him as a very bright boy, industrious and one that makes good progress."

"Louis Brandes — Can learn if he is not permitted to waste his time. He is not ready for promotion."

"Edwin Borgelt — Has no peer, among the boys in this district of children, for ability to advance and to get the full benefit of what he covers. He is a good boy, in school and out, and is ready for promotion. He has made better progress than any other pupil, except one, that has attended this school during my teaching here." Benjamin

Brandt (later Dr. Brandt, MD): He was the best boy in school, and out.

Emma Gerdemann-None have surpassed her in demeanor, and in scholarship she has eclipsed all in every text studied. She is a gem. She

is not as responsive as Laura.

Hilda Schuster: is a good little girl, and is an average child in ability to learn.

Mattie Stein-Is ready for rapid advancement. Her high German has hitherto handicapped her progress.

Remarks like these are written for each of the 55 pupils of this conscientious country school teacher. On page 20 he writes "Environment and general isolation hold them behind children of other communities in refinement, due appreciation and respect for others".

Mr. Audrain had received notice from the Board that his services were no longer required, so his "little black book" was really setting the record straight. He goes on — "Do not be too hasty in making adverse criticism of my work. Among the causes of my failures, are poor attendance, obtuseness and German Language on part of children, and indifference on the part of many parents." He apologizes for the library and explains how difficult it was to convince patrons of the importance of good books. He also complains how hard it is to heat the school room with a wood stove that is too small, and with a vent flue that was built wrong "against my protest".

Teacher Audrain continued: "There are some reforms needed that I have not enforced. Blunt no's, flat yes's are among them. I have tried moral suasion, but failed. Once or twice I began coercive measures but dropped them for diplomatic reasons. I came down rather heavily by forcing them to speak the English on playgrounds. I can only hope that my influence will produce good results in the community. Criticized? Opposed? Yes; I expected it. People who hold and express opinions as openly as I do, are sure to rub up the sore bunch of fur on some patrons head, while serving 4 years in public capacity."

No. 101 SEPT. 24, 1975

The 19th Century country school teacher F. L. Audrain, upon his dismissal from the Cappeln school, continues with these words from his "little black book": "I hold no cankerous grudges against any of my patrons. It is human to differ from others, and to sometimes be unreasonable about it. I trust time will bring my opponents to wipe out their unpleasant regard for me." end quote. Possibly many of us have had opportunities to say essentially the same words. — Quote "I regard the public school teacher as a very potent factor in the molding of our country's future weal." "May God help you, my successor, and succes-

sors, to do your whole duty with good conscience, unflinchingly and without giving special privileges to any, but giving all equal opportunities." "I love some of these children better than others, but I have not heard of any one accusing me of partiality." — Teacher Audrain was accused by the directors of studying law while serving as their school teacher. He goes on for a few pages justifying his extra-curricular activities, and concludes this subject with these remarks: "Yet, while they are so strict, do not confine themselves to law, medicine, etc. but remember that making too much lace (a lady school teacher had been discharged in St. Louis for making lace in her spare time), hunting too much game, or seeking pleasure in dance halls, or through other channels are just as inimical to good school work as is law study." —

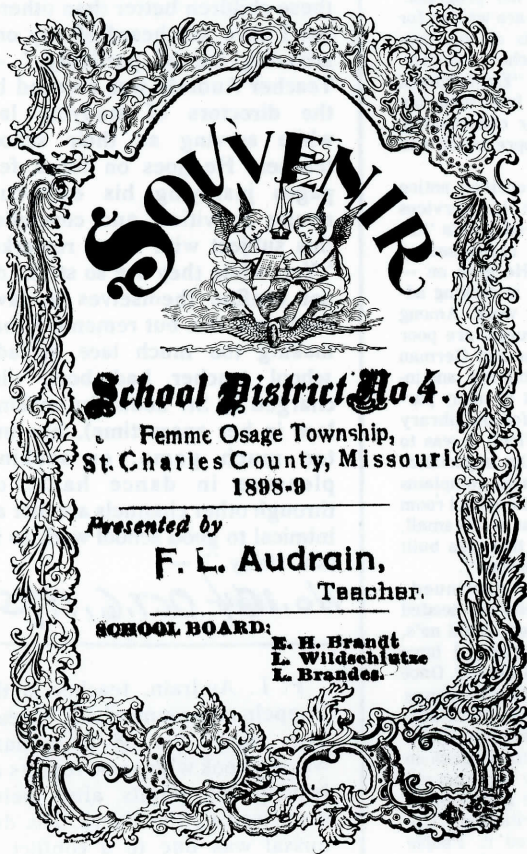
No. 104 OCT. 6, 1975

F. L. Audrain, teacher in the Cappeln one-room school 75 years ago, closes his 38 page hand written book with some regrets on leaving his pupils after being dismissed by the Board. His dismissal was due to a conflict of interest. That is, he was studying law, when he should have been directing all his attention to the school. He writes in conclusion, "There is not one that I would refuse to help or to accommodate, should they call for it. If any should desire to write me they can find me by directing a letter to me at Corning, Calif. I said I expect to see them no more. Let me contradict it:

"For love will hope and faith will trust, / That somehow, somewhere, meet we must. / Tis distance lends enchantment to the view, / And every farm, that fancy can repair / From dark oblivion, grows devinely there. / Where? Why, overthere. / There I expect to see everybody. / Some on the right and some on the left. / (Read St. Matthew Chap. 25, Verses 31 to 46) / How I do hope all these may be on the right. / Where I trust I shall be!"

No. 109 NOV. 10, 1975

6.13



*Pupils.*

- |                    |                      |
|--------------------|----------------------|
| Benjamin Brandt    | Alvin Brandt         |
| Eugene Brandt      | Emmons Brandt        |
| Fred Schultz       | William Neiwig       |
| Theophil Neiwig    | Albert Stratmann     |
| Henry Stratmann    | Edwin Borgelt        |
| Louis Wildschlutze | William Wildschlutze |
| Otto Wildschlutze  | Alvin Wildschlutze   |
| Louis Brandes      | August Schuster      |
| Edwin Schuster     | Edwin Reinhardt      |
| William Twiehaus   | Albert Bergers       |
| Otto Manger        | Amanda Steigemeir    |
| Lydia Neiwig       | Louisa Wildschlutze  |
| Minnie Backhouse   | Bertha Reinhardt     |
| Hulda Reinhardt    | Alma Twiehaus        |
| Nettie Manger      | Selma Manger         |
| Mattie Stein       | Laura Brandes        |
| Hilda Schuster     | Dina Stratmann       |
| Lena Gerdemann     | Emma Gerdemann       |
| Laura Gerdemann    | Nettie Bergers       |
| Adelia Brandt      | Cora Brandt          |
|                    | Carrie Anthony       |



*Cappelin Public School*



## 6.14 CENTENNIAL FARMS

Farmers, the most dedicated group of people in the country, are the most modest when discussing their accomplishments. This modesty is so apparent when ever one seeks to learn the life history of departed parents or grandparents. Generally, the answer is "Oh, he was just a farmer." or "She worked hard all of her life as a housewife and mother on the farm."

It is not that way in industry. Ask anyone in an industrial plant about his or her work, and quickly one hears such titles as, "Assistant Foreman," "Superintendent," "Group Leader," "Sales Manager," "Secretary to the President," etc., etc. Badges are worn to distinguish the different levels of importance, and plaques are displayed on office walls signifying various promotions, degrees, or awards.

There is nothing really wrong with a reasonable show of pride. Industry may encourage certain classification of individuals to promote greater efficiency, to identify a maze of highly specialized jobs, and to spur workers to advance steadily. Here also a man's success or failure depends so much on his own ability and application.

It is different though with a farmer. He operates principally on his own, with no one but himself to pat on the back, or to deny a raise in salary. He does not have some single specialized task to pursue each day toward ultimate proficiency. Instead, he must pursue a multitude of tasks, both physical and mental, many of which are totally unrelated.

Day after day he fills such positions as technician, mechanic, machinist, veterinarian, carpenter, electrician, conservationist, book-keeper, marketer, and horticulturist and weather prophet.

With diligence, perseverance, and a good measure of common sense, the American farmer can sufficiently master all of the aforementioned positions except that of weather prophet. His constant reliance on favorable weather, and his close commune with the wonders of nature, are the principal reasons why he remains a humble man, even though in his heart he is "proud to be a farmer", as was our country's First President, who wrote in "farmer" on various forms requiring him to state his occupation.



*Klotter & Scherer* 906 & 908 N. SIXTH STREET  
ST. LOUIS MO.

*Wm. F. & Catherine Schiermeier*

In this Bicentennial year we all become more conscious of the importance of our farming heritage. Historic farms throughout the nation are being honored in one way or the other.

Several weeks ago the Missouri Extension Office announced that a special plaque would be awarded to all farms in St. Louis and St. Charles counties that have been owned and operated by the same family throughout the past 100 years.

Present owners, and previous owners, must be direct descendants of the original owner; that is, son or daughter, grandson or granddaughter. The farm must not be less than 40 acres, and it must have a gross in-

come of \$2,500 or more annually. The owner must also agree to display the plaque, or identification sign, at all times.

Filing date, accompanied by a brief historical account, was Sunday, February 8, 1976. There are a number of farms in the western section of St. Charles county that should qualify for this distinction, and each would harbor a wealth of interesting stories from pioneer days to the present.

One such farm surely to qualify was purchased by my grandfather, Wm. F. Schiermeier, an immigrant from Germany in 1849. It is considered the homeplace throughout the relationship so it is easier to write

about this particular "Centennial Farm," although its story is typical of others in the immediate vicinity.

Grandfather's farm of some 266 acres, consisting of 186 tillable crop land acres, 40 in pastures and creeks, and 40 acres of timber, lies along county road "T" at the Warren county line, and at the edge of Teuque Prairie.

Grandfather was chiefly a livestock and grain producer, and the farm has remained essentially that way to this day. In the early days very little "know how" from farm agents, or government booklets from Washington could be obtained. However, taxes were low. A tax receipt for the entire farm, dated December 31, 1871, and signed by John F. Dierker, county collector, shows the tax to be \$28.81.

It is not known who obtained the original land grant from the government or when the farm home was built. It is known, though, that the home was remodeled in 1875. Here Grandmother Schiermeier, also an immigrant from Germany, raised nine children, supplied the table year around with at least ninety-five per cent of food that came directly off the farm, molded candles, spun wool and made practically all the clothes required for the large family, picked the down from geese for feather beds, tended the garden, scrubbed clothes on the wash board with homemade laundry soap made from lye, grease, and ashes, constructed mattresses from corn shucks, plus countless other pioneer chores.

While she was busy with "women's work", grandfather and the boys were tilling the ground with a walking plow, broadcasting seed on a hundred or more acres by hand, cutting wheat or oats with a wheat cradle or sythe, rough sawing lumber down in the woods for another barn or chicken house, cutting blocks of ice from the pond and packing them in sawdust in the ice house for a supply of ice through the next summer, or driving a herd of cattle across the Missouri River ice at Washington.

Horses were driven around a circle in the barn to provide power for shredding oats, and mules pulled stacks of hay into the loft. It was a complete farm in every sense of the word and the operations just mentioned are only a few that were carried on during the year.

Herman was the only son who chose to remain a farmer, and his son Harry followed suit. Under their management the farm, once considered worn out, has now highly productive fertile soil, and modes of operation have run the full gamut. That is, cultivating the soil has gone through all stages, from the walking plow to the chisel plow; seeding by hand has progressed on down to wheat drills and four row corn planters; wheat cradles have given way to various horse drawn and tractor drawn binders to the modern com-

bine; and surveys and sleds have been replaced by a constant succession of motorized vehicles.

From 1918 to 1950 Herman, and later his son Harry, were in partnership with three other adjoining farms on the ownership of a threshing outfit, complete with steam engine and separator. This same separator, now a true museum piece, is being restored by Harry's son Gerald who forms a fourth generation of direct descendants to farm the old homeplace in the same progressive tradition.

In 1946 the Schiermeier farm was cited as a model farm under the "Balanced Farm and Home" program conducted by the Extension Service. Again in 1947 the farm was awarded first place in the district.

As mentioned previously, these historical accounts and accomplishments can be repeated on a number of other good farms in the area. They should all be discussed when information is made known. Remember, too, the Bicentennial Agriculture Book being prepared by the St. Charles County Missouri Agriculture American Revolution Bicentennial Committee. Another fine book in the making is the Historic Site Book sponsored by the St. Charles County Historical Society and prepared by Harlan Bartholomew and Associates.

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The Family of William Fredrick and  
 Catherine Wilhelmina (Fronsbein)  
 Schiermeier, both of whom were born  
 in Germany. -- Left to right, back row ---  
 Herman G. bn 1876, Wilh. Louise (Schmidt) 1874, Fredrick  
 W<sup>m</sup> 1862, Anna M. Emma (Neuman) 1870, Ernst Aug. 1867,  
 Carolina (Lina) C. Meier) 1865, Aug. Fredr. 1878, Parents 1834  
 & 1833, and Johan Hy. 1861 --- Johann Hy. W. 1858 died  
 at 5 & Henrietta M. 1872 died as infant.