

# **Historical Perspectives**

**A Semi-annual Journal  
of the  
German American Museum,  
Library and Family History Center**



St. John Nepomucene Church, Fort Atkinson, Iowa

**Issue #13**

**Spring 2022**

# **German American Museum, Library And Family History Center**

## **Mission Statement**

**Preserve the Past  
Celebrate the Presence  
Embrace the Future**

## **About Historical Perspectives**

**With the publication of Historical Perspectives,  
Historische Betrachtungen, we are focusing on articles  
From many disciplines including the arts, humanities, history,  
literature, and the social and physical sciences.**

## **German American Museum Exhibit Theme Areas**

**Geographic features of the landscape  
Indigenous Peoples: removal policies and tribal revival  
Europeans coming to Iowa  
Role of religion and the clergy in the community  
Importance of education and the teaching nuns  
Development of farming and industrial arts  
Evolution of family social life  
Sports: baseball, basketball and softball  
National defense service and economic change  
Preserving and celebrating cultural heritages**

## St. Lucas Historical Society

### German American Museum, Library and Family History Center

Dear friends of the Museum:

The past few months have been quite busy with the arrival of 8 glass display cases and the reorganizing of the military artifacts and uniforms. Mel and Janet Bodensteiner have worked wonders installing the Father Al Schmitt exhibit in the new glass cases.

Mel Bodensteiner has been instrumental in obtaining a \$5,000 grant from the Fayette County Community Foundation to the Father Aloysius Schmitt American Legion Post 691 for additional display cases for the military uniforms and artifacts in the Museum.

We held a board meeting in early May that addressed: review of Christmas Reflections, possible roof grant application, financial update, historic signage in the area., monthly speaker series, management of donations, Wednesday morning coffee at the museum, status of blacksmith shop, and Wilhelmine Kuennen's German language class materials.

The Max Kade Institute of the University of Wisconsin Madison is loaning its premier exhibit of "Germans in Wisconsin" to our Museum for exhibit this Summer. Come and learn about this rich history of Germans in Wisconsin. Three years ago we hosted the University of Iowa exhibit on "Germans in Iowa".

As you sort through your family valuables, please consider giving a copy of any trans-Atlantic correspondence with German relatives from over the past one and one half centuries to the Museum. Rosemary Kuennen Most has offered to help translate these German letters. They would be a valuable contribution to understanding these family ties through the decades.

This Journal issue contains articles on the history of the St. John Nepomucene Church; Black Hawk Bluff; Professor Kovarik, the nuclear scientist; Pioneer Families of Festina and St. Lucas; Diversity in Faith; and German Wildflowers. We hope you find these topics of interest. Let us know of historic topics for future issues.

Have a great Spring and Summer.

Sincerely,

Clair Blong

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# **Saint John Nepomucene Church**

## **A Historical Overview**

### **from Father Petiot to Father Kucera**

**By Shay Gooder**



At the corner of Oak Street and Hiawatha Trail in Ft. Atkinson, Iowa, a powerful stone edifice sits established through the perseverance and commonality of the area's early Catholic settlers. The Roman Catholic Church of Saint (St.) John of Nepomucene is an imposing structure of Gothic Revival composition in the quaint town, displaying smooth stone walls and large pointed windows with red brick lintels, interspersed with buttresses and covered by an expansive wood gable roof. However, despite the impressive display of architectural and human ingenuity, the church was almost not meant to be.

As with much of the early settlement in the area, the Catholic history in northeast Iowa began with Fort Atkinson, the government fort established to keep peace between the warring Winnebago and Sioux tribes. In 1842, Reverend (Rev.) Father Remigius Petiot of Dubuque traveled to the fort to find a number of Catholic converts, baptizing many of the Winnebago infant children himself. This was of course at the government camp, or "Indian Agency," that was more widely known as the Old Mission located roughly five miles southeast of the fort.

Father Petiot's rapid success at the camp was met with disdain from Rev. Lowry, a Presbyterian minister from Princeton, Kentucky. Father Petiot was forced to leave his mission work as a result, with his successor being another Dubuque priest by the name of Rev. Father Joseph Cretin, who arrived in 1843.

Father Cretin soon became instrumental and wildly popular at the Old Mission camp. With the help of both the Winnebago and Euro-American settlers, a log chapel was erected on what was once part of Philip Huber's farm that was first known as "Our Lady of the Wilderness." This name would later be changed to "Our Lady of Seven Sorrows," a reflection of the many hardships incurred at Fort Atkinson.

Cretin would later go on to become the first Bishop of St. Paul, Minnesota, in 1851, with the log church destroyed by fire thereafter sometime between late 1853 and early 1854. This fire was considered by many to be incendiary in origin, with the malicious intent suggested to be that of a Francis Roger, a staunch supporter of Rev. Lowry feared that the new arrivals were taking over the territory.

The early settlers that clustered around Fort Atkinson and the Old Mission, who were primarily Bohemian and German immigrants, were forced to travel for worship to surrounding communities with established chapels of their own. These included St. Mary's (i.e., Our Lady of Seven Dolors) of Festina, St. Wenceslaus of Spillville, and a small German church just south of Spillville by the name of St. Clements.

The early Catholic settlers would soon desire their own place of worship, calling to order a meeting on November 5<sup>th</sup> of 1873, representing the very beginning of the parish. With John Votava presiding over as chairman, a unanimous decision was reached to build a church in honor of St. John Nepomucene within the city of Ft. Atkinson.

As the patron saint of Bohemia, St. Nepomucene was born ca. 1340 in Nepomuk, a small town in the Pilsen district of Bohemia that is, as you may infer, famous for its Pilsener beer. As the story goes, King Wenceslaus IV (not whom the Catholic church in Spillville is named after) became suspicious of his wife's fidelity. The Queen's confessor at the time, St. Nepomucene, refused to reveal to the King what his wife had confided, and was subsequently thrown into the Moldau River to drown as a martyr in 1383. He would later be made a saint in 1729, with the acts of canonization based on his refusal to violate the secrecy of the confessional.

Preparation of the building materials and construction of the church began immediately following acquisition of the church grounds. These were obtained from J. F. Clark on May 14<sup>th</sup> of 1874, who donated the lots for both the church and St. John's Cemetery located about a quarter of a mile to the east. The endeavor lacked an architect to form and design the plans, nor a contractor to erect the building. Rather, the parishioners generously donated their time and labor in support of the single cause, with the masons sheltering at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Budke during construction of the church.

Unfortunately, funding would run out following completion of the four stone walls and the roof could not be added. Undeterred by this encumbrance, Joseph Sulak would mortgage his farm and borrow money to finish the church. However, massive crop failure around the area in the following years would force the insurance company to threaten foreclosure on the loan, putting both the church and Mr. Sulak's farm in danger of being lost entirely. Fortunately, Father Francis X. Boeding would arrive from St. Lucas, traveling from farm to farm asking for donations to pay off the loan interest, and collecting enough to save both the Sluka farmstead and complete the addition of the roof.



**Father Francis X. Boeding (left) and the Joseph Sluka family (right)**

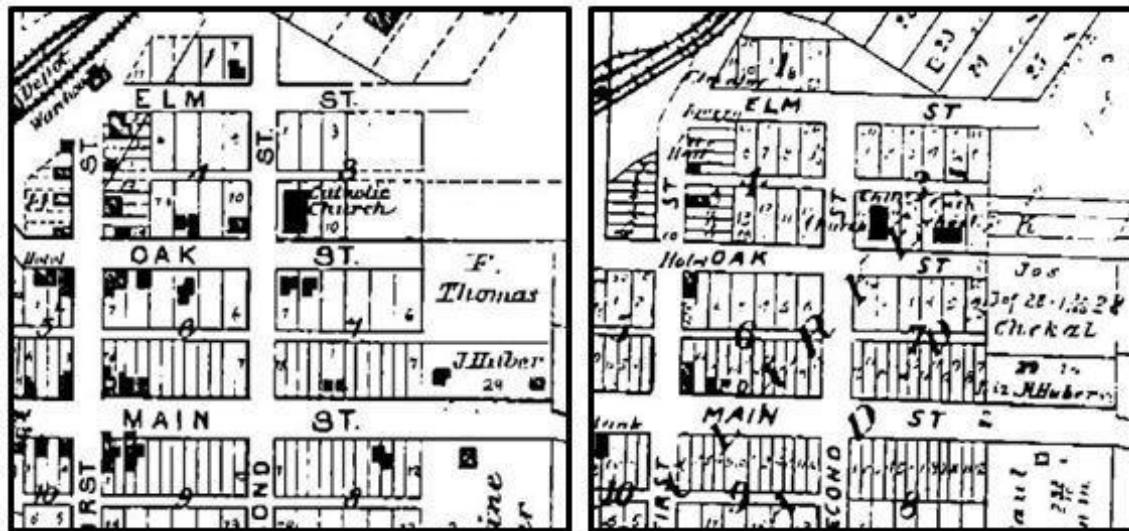
The church would be completed in 1875, with the cornerstone blessed by Father Francis Mikota of Spillville. The initial structure measured 48 by 70 feet with 24-foot high walls, at a final construction cost of \$5,367.32. The congregation would initially be attended to by a Rev. Father Sulak, S. J., a missionary who would visit Ft. Atkinson on occasion from his own church near Monona.

The first resident pastor would be Rev. Father Francis Ehrenberger from Rock Creek, Missouri, who would take charge on March 1st of 1876. He would minister the congregation for two years until called away to St. Mary's Church in Dubuque for one year, then returning to Ft. Atkinson to officiate for one more year before being appointed pastor of St. Wenceslaus at Spillville in 1879. Father Francis X. Boeding of St. Lucas, who previously helped save both the church and the Sluka farm through his tireless collection efforts, was given charge of St. John's congregation until 1885.

Next to serve St. John's was the newly ordained Rev. Father Bohumil Kramolis, who attended the parish from 1885 until 1895, while at the same time also serving as a mission pastor to the St. Aloysius Church of Calmar. Membership would increase significantly during Father Kramolis' tenure, and the decision would be made to expand the church in 1886 through the addition of a sanctuary and two sacristies, enlarging the structure to the dimensions of 48 by 90 feet.



Plans would also be initiated to establish a school, which would be erected in the early 1890's on school grounds donated by Mrs. Gertrude Giesen, which measured 50 by 100 feet. The first school building was a frame structure consisting of two classrooms and a living apartment for the Franciscan Sisters from Silver Lake, Minnesota, who staffed the school of about 60 pupils until 1895. The Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration from LaCrosse, Wisconsin, would then direct classes until the year 1900.

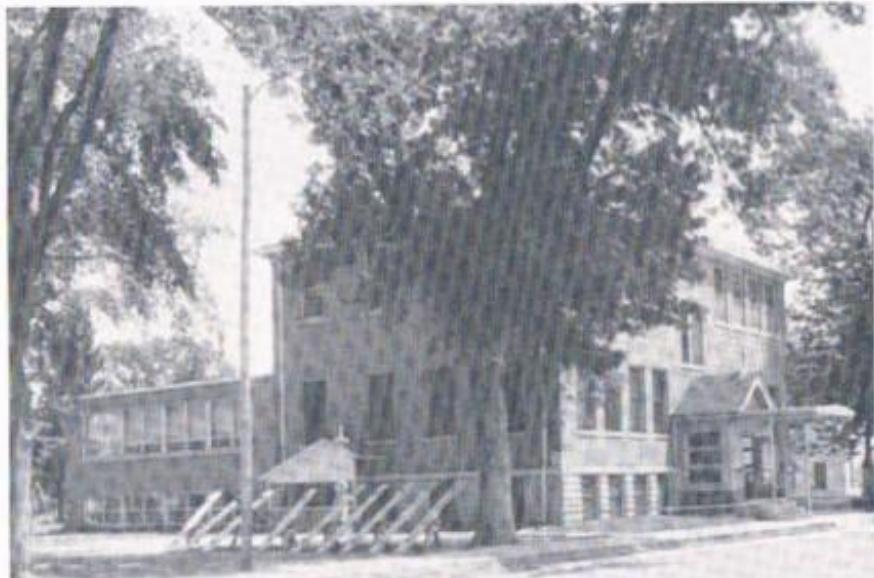


1886 plat depiction of the church (left) and 1905 plat depiction with the appearance of the school (right)

Father Kramolis' successor would be the Rev. Father Francis Vrba in 1895, who would be quick to make improvements of his own to the church. These included the addition of the belfry in 1899, as well as remodeling and replastering the interior. John Neuzil would serve as the chief stone mason of the church tower, with the two bells installed donated by Joseph Spillman (Spielman) and John and Mary Votava.

Tragically, a fire in September of the same year would destroy the priest's house and all of the parish records. Father Vrba would be forced to take residency in the parochial school, which paused classes for one year. The following year, newly arrived Rev. Father Francis Kopecky would erect a new rectory north of the church on the corner property acquired from John Votava, which was complete for occupancy by September of 1900.

Several changes would occur with the St. John's school in the next few years. Father Kopecky would enlist teachers from the School Sisters of St. Francis of Milwaukee, Wisconsin, who carried on the education of the students for many years after. Rev. Father John Marsalek, who followed Father Kopecky in December of 1907, would build a new, two-story brick school in 1908 that measured 36 by 56 feet, containing three classrooms, a chapel, and an apartment for



St. John's School, Fort Atkinson, Iowa

the Sisters. Later, due to increasing enrollment during the mid-twentieth century, additional modifications would be made to the school under the direction of Rev. Father Stephen Kucera. Indoor restrooms would be added to the school in 1950, and the building enlarged with a new addition in 1959 that provided two more classrooms, a multi-purpose room, two lavatories, and a storage space for the lunch commodities.

Perhaps the most versatile and ambitious of pastors to take charge of St. John of Nepomucene was Rev. Father Charles Dragoun. Arriving at Ft. Atkinson from Chelsea, Iowa, in May of 1912 to succeed Father Marsalek, Father Dragoun possessed the ability to both preach and hear

confession in Czech, German, and English. At the time of his arrival, the church was roughly \$2,500 in debt, which he was able to cancel in 1913 through his ambitious efforts.

Father Dragoun would also take the lead in improving the building's more decorative elements, including ordering stained glass windows in 1915 from Munich, Bavaria, which shipment delays caused by World War I would delay their arrival until June of 1921, the same year a new pipe organ was installed at a cost of \$2,700. Father Dragoun would faithfully serve the congregation until his passing on March 25<sup>th</sup> of 1930, being laid to rest at St. John's Cemetery.

Following Father Dragoun's passing, Rev. Father W. A. Dostal would take over at St. John's until he was succeeded by Rev. Father Stephen Kucera on July 14<sup>th</sup> of 1944. As a child, Father Dostal would arrive with his parents from Moravia, Czechoslovakia and settle on a farm near Little Turkey before attending St. Paul Seminary following his graduation from Loras College. While at St. John's, Father Dostal would purchase four acres of land that served as a parish park and playground for the school children, as well as purchasing a residence in 1937 that became known as St. John's Convent.

Subsequent pastor Father Kucera, the last appointment made by Archbishop Beckman of Dubuque, would further carry on improvements to the church through the construction of a new sacristy in 1948, addition of a side entrance to the church in 1949, tuck-pointing of the stonework in 1955, new roof installation on both the church and the school in 1962, and building a nursery room in 1964 that is the same dimensions as the sacristy.

For its nearly 150 years of existence, St. John of Nepomucene has stood the test of time thanks to the passion of its pastors, the faithfulness of its congregation, and the dedication of the community. Despite adversities, the towering structure represents an exquisite display of stone masonry that was often completed by parishioners. Even with the numerous additions to the church throughout the decades, the original 48 by 70 foot building finished in 1875 is still difficult to see, a testament to how these improvements did not spoil the architectural lines of the church's earliest rendition.



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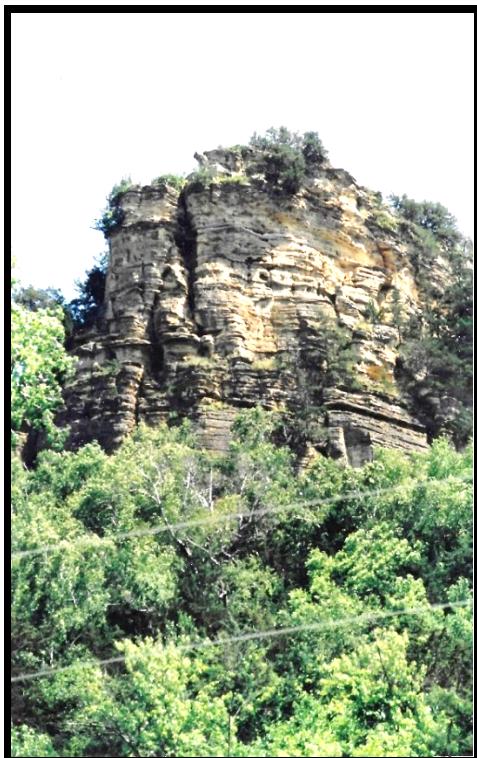
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## **Black Hawk's Bluff: A Sentinel to History**

*By Clyde Cremer*

### **Black Hawk and the Cliff**



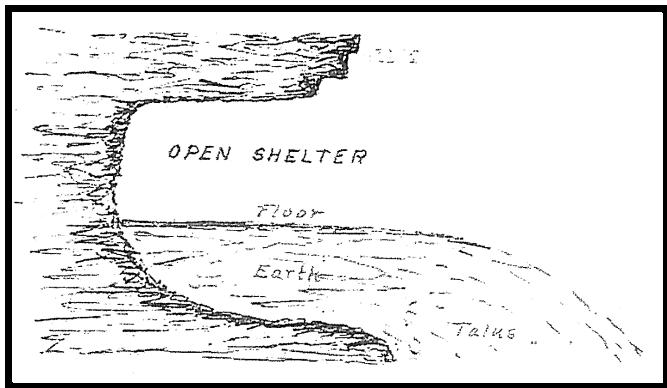
When motorists traverse State Highway 26, barreling down this asphalt strip, listening to the radio, adjusting the air conditioner, and totally relaxed in the micro-environment of their vehicles, the last thing they are thinking about is the history that surrounds them. Yes, we are slaves to technology. Nevertheless, the one prominent landmark that is hard to miss is that of the towering edifice above the Upper Iowa River, two miles south of New Albin. Once it was home to bears, turkeys (now reintroduced), passenger pigeons, elk, bison, wolves and peregrine falcons that used its crevices for nesting. This landmark is locally known as Black Hawk's Bluff, even though it is doubtful that Chief Black Hawk ever ascended its slopes to marvel at the panoramic landscape below.

### **The Bluff and Its Surrounding Environment**

The bluff rises 940 feet above sea level and the cliff face itself is 80 feet high. The entire height of Black Hawk's Bluff is 280 feet above the floodplain below. It is

composed of Jordan sandstone which is the basis for other outcroppings in the area. The cliff face was most likely exposed, after many thousands of years of erosion, by water from the ancient river (that is now the Upper Iowa River). The wind and rain also pummeled it due to the cliff's constant exposure to these elements. The river was much higher in elevation in post-glacial times, but through the ages it cut a channel deeper into the underlying strata. It is believed by geologists that, as the glaciers melted, the Mississippi River backed up into the Upper Iowa River and flooded areas that are high above the current river level. In fact, the various terraces or "benches" are alluvial deposits from this much higher ancient river's flow. These alluvial deposits of sand and gravel were future sites for villages of the indigenous inhabitants in the area and, later, the settlers who misappropriated the Native American lands.

## “The Cave”



***Black Hawk's rock shelter taken from  
“Blackhawk Cave” Rock Shelter,  
an unpublished work.***

The so-called cave of local lore is actually a rock shelter located at the base of the cliff. This rock shelter is 15 feet across its face, seven feet in depth and four feet in height. These rock shelters, whether large or small, gave cover and safety to the indigenous people in the era of semi-survival. There are a number of these rock shelters scattered through the rough hills of Allamakee County. This rock shelter was excavated by several individuals in 1929. They were Ellison Orr, Dr. Warren Hayes, and Dr. Henry Field. Ellison Orr was an archeologist. The rock shelter had been inhabited for many years as a semi-permanent shelter from the elements and enemies. Without going into great detail, the excavation unearthed pottery shards, an arrowhead, charcoal, and bones of bears, deer, pigeons, fish, turtles, and turkeys. To say that life was tough for these people would be an understatement.

## The Black Hawk War



During the Black Hawk War of 1832, the cliff sat as a silent witness to the bloodshed happening around it. It is quite probable that the U.S. soldiers who were trying to track down the last remnants of Black Hawk's tribe used this elevated promontory to view the surrounding area for campfires, which would give away the location of this renegade band of Native Americans. It is inconceivable that Chief Black Hawk would have been hiding in “a cave” somewhere around the cliff. The actual battle, if you could call it that, was carried out on an island near the mouth of Bad Axe Creek, across from New Albin. The remnants of the tribe were decimated; 4565 shot, shell, and musketry, and they were at “the end of their tether!” Black Hawk actually gave himself up to the Winnebago tribe at Prairie La Crosse. He was then taken to Ft. Crawford where he was incarcerated. However, it is hard to dispel the local myth of Black Hawk's Cave.

Sometime after the Black Hawk War, the Winnebago and the Sauk and Fox had a skirmish around the base of the cliff. Not much else is known about this conflict. The author of this paper found a spear point in this area in the mid-1950s, but a state archeologist stated that spears were not used after the native people obtained bow-and-arrow technology (about 1,500 years ago), so this spear point was not used in this skirmish.

## **The Early Inhabitants**

The river now known as the Upper Iowa River was once located in what was called the Oneota Valley. This valley, and the surrounding area of Allamakee County, was believed to be inhabited by indigenous people for some 12,000 years. These early people were hunter-gatherers and used rock shelters for protection from the elements and predators, whether man or beast. The Paleo-Indian period was between 10,000 BC to 8,000 BC where they occupied the high hill tops along the river. The Archaic Period lasted from 8000 BC to 1,000 BC, the Woodland period was between 1,000 BC to 1,300 AD, and the Oneota period was between 1,300 AD and 1800 AD. Between 1640 and the 1800s, the area was inhabited by the Mdewakanton Sioux, the Ioway (or in the Sioux language, *Ayuhwa*, which means the “sleepy ones”), the Winnebago, and the Sauk and Fox. The first whites to visit Iowa were Marquette and Joliet who plied the Wisconsin River and then the Mississippi River to about 35 miles south of the Upper Iowa River. The next white explorers were Father Hennepin, Antoine Aquel, and Michel Accault, and it seems likely that they visited a village at the mouth of the Upper Iowa River.

Evidence still remains of the Native people’s occupation of this area. In fact, as a youngster, this writer found a piece of human skull (2 ½ inches square) on a bluff west of Black Hawk’s cliff. Now come the questions: Who? How? When? A fragment of a once-living human being whose life has been swallowed by the passing of time. In another bluff, across the river, in the 1960’s, some hikers from New Albin found two skeletons in an obscure crevice. The skeletons were of a woman and a baby. At the time, archeologists felt that the baby and mother probably died during childbirth. Members of her tribe interred both of them in this natural sarcophagus.

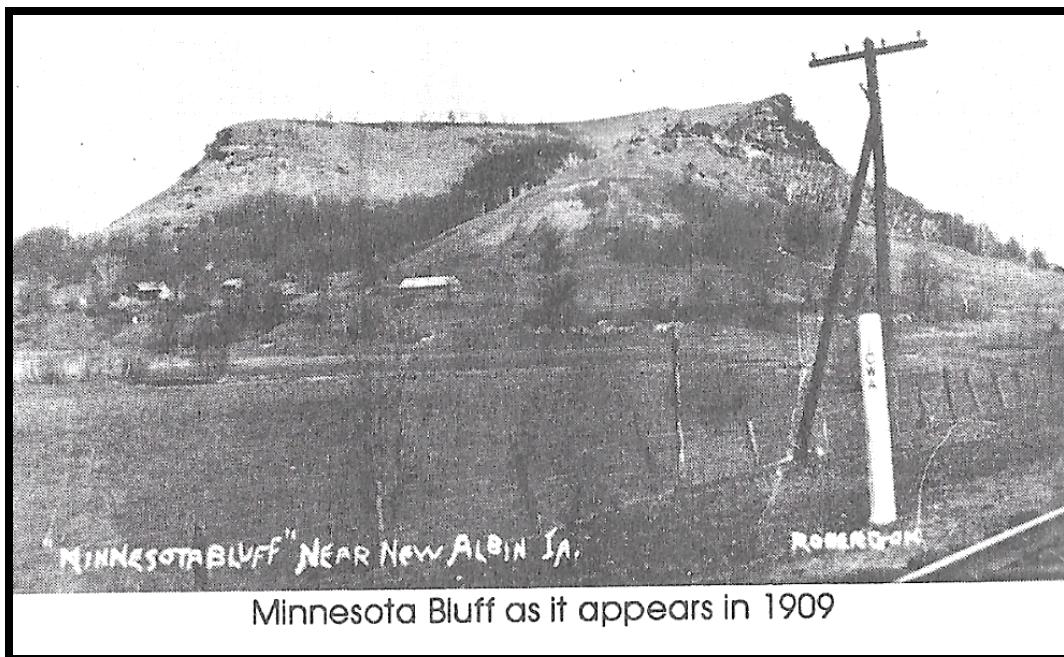
A mile to the south of the cliff is a site known as Fish Farm Mounds State Preserve (named after the former owners, the Fish Family). The ancient inhabitants, known as the Red Ochre People, built these mounds as they did many others in Northeast Iowa. Some excavations of these mounds produced arrowheads, pottery shards, and some beads. In some areas, copper items were found which supports the belief that they traded all the way to the Upper Peninsula of Michigan, where *placer copper* can be found in a fairly pure form.

## **Plant Geography**

An interesting phenomenon of this area is the growth of prairie plants (in lieu of trees) on the southern slopes of hills. This is due to the warmer and drier climate on these south facing slopes. These climatic anomalies are referred to by plant geographers as *grassy balds*. To dispel another myth(s), these grassy balds, devoid of trees, *were not* caused by Native Americans burning the hillsides or the railroads cutting the trees for railroad ties. On the top of Black Hawk’s Cliff can

be found plants such as Pasque flowers, the shooting star flower, and the compass plant. These are normally found only on the Great Plains. However, the climate is changing and the hills that this author used to hike are now so thick with brush that a raccoon could hardly get through the tangled mess. The precipitation has increased greatly in the Upper Midwest since the 1950s and the result is that many grassy balds have been taken over by cedar and hardwood trees.

Eastern Red Cedar can be found in precarious positions growing on the edge of exposed cliffs. The cedar trees grow slowly as they cling to life with minimum amounts of soil moisture and nutrients. These small, twisted trees are referred to as Krumholtz by plant geographers. This writer studied the cross-sections of two of these trees. One of these depauperate trees was only three feet tall and had started its growth in the early 1800s. The other tree, about 12 feet tall, began life in about 1720! Both trees were dead at the time of sampling, so I had to ascertain the approximate date of death. By the way, this author does not believe in destructive sampling, so only used dead trees for tree ring analysis also known as the science of dendrochronology. These trees showed the increase and decrease of competition near them, but the study did not lead to any remarkable insights into rainfall patterns.



*Grassy bald on Minnesota Bluff, just north of New Albin. Note: Trees growing in the center of the bald are located in a swale which collects rainfall and nutrients in this normally dry aspect of Minnesota Bluff. This allows for the growth of mature trees.*



*A grassy bald on the south edge of New Albin.*

### **The Town of New Albin**

On one of the terraces discussed earlier, a former Native American village became the town of New Albin (formally called State Line), which can be seen two miles to the north of the bluff. The residents of New Albin constantly find archaic artifacts from the former residents in their gardens and construction sites. In 1915, a stone tablet was found during a basement excavation. A petroglyph was etched on a slab of Catlinite or pipestone which is only found in Southwest Minnesota. The slab is etched with a petroglyph of a warrior and a horse. It had to have been purposely buried as it was several feet under the soil surface. It now resides in the visitor's center at Effigy Mounds National Monument.

One of the historic novelties located on the northern edge of the town is "The Iron Post." Before statehood, the territories of Iowa and Minnesota had a dispute as to where the boundary between them should be located. Minnesota believed that it should be at the Upper Iowa River. The dispute was settled by the U.S. Congress on August 4, 1846. In 1849, Capt. Thomas J. Lee placed a cast iron obelisk at its present spot, the southern boundary of Minnesota. Quite frankly, as a resident of New Albin and the surrounding area, I am glad they made the Iowa-Minnesota border north of New Albin because I couldn't take those Minnesota winters!! ;-)

### **The Sand Cove**

A geologic phenomenon can be found a mile to the west and is locally known as Sand Cove. The ancient river was once so much higher than its present location that the river deposited a deep layer of sand, in what was an ancient beach, that transcended a large area. The sand deposits were largely exposed so that a strong wind would deposit drifts of sand across the roadway. This author's family owned a farm in this area. The sand formed a dike where the trees along a fence line would catch the blowing sand and form a loess deposit. Today, good farming practices have stabilized this sand in the Sand Cove and little of the original expanse of sand can be seen. Recently, fracking companies wanted to mine this sand for their oil drilling operations, but the

local landowners said no. A pioneer cemetery is located in the Sand Cove on the former property of Peter Colsch and family.

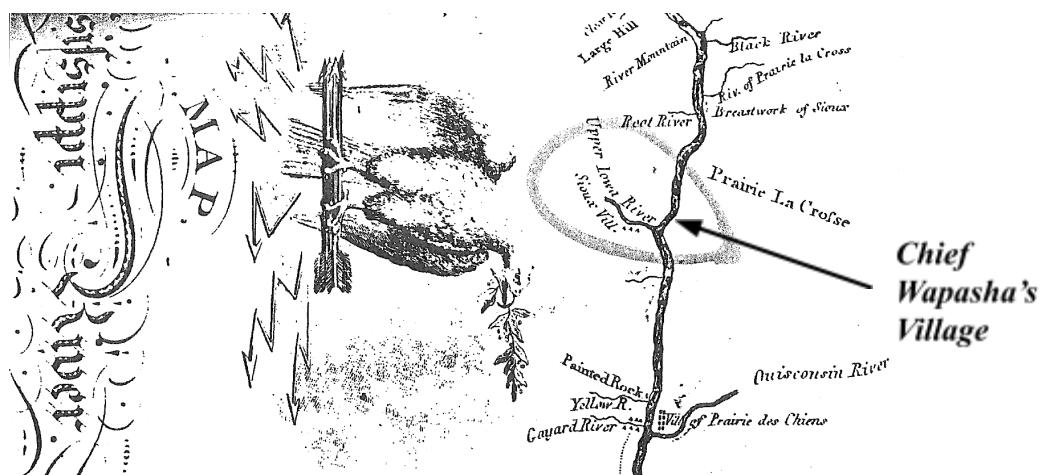
### Zebulon Pike and Chief Wapasha



In 1805, explorer Zebulon Pike (yes, of Pike's Peak fame) left St Louis to find the source of the Mississippi River. On a rainy day, September 10, 1805, Pike paid a visit to the village of the Mdewakanton Sioux Chief Wapasha. This village was located on the south side of the Upper Iowa River, near the mouth, at a small bend in the river that can be seen from the top of Black Hawk's Cliff. The village had been located at this site since around 1800. The soldiers had shot at some pigeons earlier (probably passenger pigeons) and thus Chief Wapasha was forewarned of their friendly arrival. Zebulon Pike had met the Chief days earlier in Prairie du Chien and called him La Feuille, meaning The Leaf in French. The expedition was greeted with

three rounds of friendly musketry, which Pike answered in kind. However, the warriors in the village were on a ration of whiskey and their aim was not very accurate. Thus, Zebulon Pike was worried about his men's safety. When he went ashore, he had his pistol in his belt and his sword in his hand. He was then invited into the Chief's lodge. After the fanfare, the expedition and the villagers had food and refreshments (probably more whiskey). When Zebulon Pike departed, the Chief gave Pike a peace pipe and he gave the Chief more whiskey. This was the medium of trade between the whites and the Native Americans. When the meeting ended, Zebulon Pike headed north to Prairie La Crosse (present-day La Crosse, Wisconsin). There has been some recent thought about an excavation of this village site along the Upper Iowa River, but after 200 years of flooding, siltation, and the dredging of sediment from the river, starting in the mid-1950s, it would probably be an exercise in futility.

**Note: A good read is the Diary of Zebulon Pike, available in larger, well-stocked libraries.**

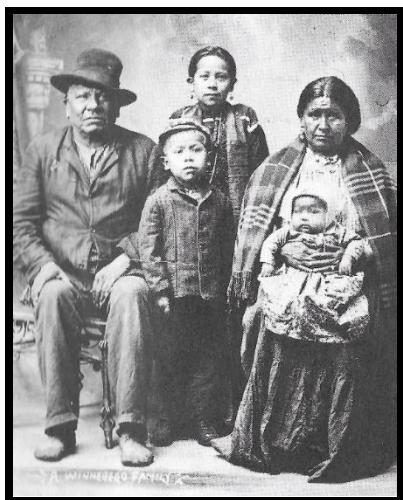


*Map drawn by the Pike Expedition in 1805 showing the village of Chief Wapasha on the Upper Iowa River.*

## Gabbitt's Cabin

A photo from around 1870-1880 shows that all the trees had been clear-cut to build a corral and later a cabin, which was constructed of square, hewn oak timbers. It was not very large, but the occupants were lucky to have even this modest home. This was also called the Brookman's cabin, which probably preceded Gabbitt's cabin. In the mid-1950s, the landowners removed the dilapidated structure and hauled off the timbers for some unknown use.

## Occupation Below the Cliff



**Frank Decorah Family**

As a youngster, this author's family lived under the shadow of the cliff in the frame home built in the late 1920s or early 1930s. When the basement was excavated, the contractors found pottery shards, arrowheads, and some bones. The basement had an unpaved floor and I found a complete arrowhead there, as well as one lying on the unpaved garage floor. The Native Americans who lived there prior to the frame dwelling had a good spot for an encampment: It was near the river, its forest provided firewood and building materials, and it had game for food. Where the artesian well now stands, in an earlier time there may have been a spring.

Local historians from New Albin claim that a fort was located where the Iowa River Road and Highway 26 now meet. I expect that this was on the terrace overlooking Hays Lake.

This fort was constructed at the time of the Black Hawk War and after it was abandoned, the local natives moved in and used it for whatever purpose they could. One of these natives was Chief Decorah and family and the Thompson family. I expect that this was not the Chief after which the town of Decorah, in Winneshiek County, was named. I have found references to a number of Chiefs by the name of Decorah in my readings.

## The Area Today

So, what has happened to these historic sites where the ebb and flow of human civilization eked out a living for thousands of years? The alluvial terraces were plowed into farm fields and the flatlands along the river floodplain and the silver maple, cottonwood, and willow trees were dozed into piles and burned prior to cultivation. As an example, I hunted for arrowheads on the terrace above Hays Lake some years ago. Yes, I found a small, intact arrowhead that was dropped unnoticed by its maker. A short time later I found a Liberty Head five cent piece from 1917. On the first find I could envision the encampment of indigenous people from an unknown era and on the second I could see a farmer with his horse-drawn, single bottom plow cutting another furrow. He then stopped to wipe his brow on a hot summer day, pulling out his handkerchief, as well as a five-cent piece that he accidentally dropped on the ground. Civilizations come and go, but they leave some of their cultural items behind for future

generations to ponder. If these remnants could only talk, just like the silent sentinel that has overlooked the Oneota Valley for eons: Black Hawk's Cliff.

*Clyde Cremer is a professional forester with three degrees in forestry and natural history.*

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1918 age 38

## The Life and Contributions of Alois Francis Kovářík PhD

By Steven A. Klimesh

**Narozen 8. Března 1880  
Zemřel 13. Listopadu 1965  
85 let**

**March 08, 1880  
November 13, 1965  
85 years**



ca. 1950 age 70

## Spillville, Iowa native made an enormous impact on the world

### His ancestry:



Born in 1880 Alois Francis Kovářík was the fifth child of Wencel and Barbara (Mikeš or Mikesh) Kovářík. Wencel, born in Všeteč, South Bohemia in 1845 emigrated to Spillville, Iowa in 1861. Upon arriving in Spillville, Wencel began practicing his trade as a harness maker. Barbara was born in Sepekov South Bohemia in December 1845. Barbara emigrated to America in 1854 with her parents settling on a farm near Spillville, Iowa. Wencel Kovářík and Barbara Mikeš married in 1867; they had seven children. Life was not easy in the early years. Records

show yearly income was small. In 1869 Wencel sold 15 harnesses for a total of \$570 and 50 halters worth \$75 and did \$100 in repair work for a total of \$740 (\$14,650 in 2020 dollars). His harness shop, with living quarters on the second floor, was one of the first buildings in Spillville constructed from local bricks made at a brick yard between Spillville and Calmar founded by Tomáš Dvořák in 1867. The harness shop, pictured above, was razed in 1971.

### Education and Recognition:

Alois began his formal education by attending the St. Wenceslaus Parish "1870 Old School". This school, as of March 2022 is still standing and is the oldest Czech Parochial school in America. His teacher was his cousin J.J. Kovářík who came to teach in Spillville in 1868. Alois attended the Decorah Institute, a prestigious college preparatory school operated by John Breckenridge, graduating in 1896 at age 16. Upon graduation he taught chemistry and physics in that same institution from 1896 to 1900.

Advanced degrees attained and positions held by Professor Kovářík include: University of Minnesota, B.A. 1904; M.A. 1907; PH.D. 1909; Victoria University Manchester, Sc.D. 1916 (NOTE: Doctor of Science: Scientiae Doctor (ScD) in Latin, which is often abbreviated to Sc.D. or D.Sc., is an academic program designed for people with exceptional research abilities. It is usually awarded to scholars in recognition of their substantial contribution to scientific knowledge required beyond that of a Ph.D. (Doctorate of Philosophy).;

Yale University, HON. M.A. 1925; Yale University, Assistant Professor of Physics, 1916-1922; Associate Professor, 1922-1925; Professor, 1925-1948; Professor Emeritus, 1948-1965; Fellow Silliman College (The final and 10<sup>th</sup> college of Yale University) 1933-1948, Associate Fellow, 1948-1965; Charles University, Prague, Dr. Rer. Nat. 1932, (literally: *Doctor of the things of nature, doctor of natural sciences*, is a postgraduate academic degree awarded by universities in some European countries).



On September 1, 1954 Professor Kovářík was awarded an outstanding achievement medal by Dr. J. L. Morrill, president of the University of Minnesota at a special banquet in Coffman Memorial Union Hall at Minneapolis, MN. Dr. Morrill read the following citation in making the presentation: "The regents of the University of Minnesota, as a token of high esteem and in recognition of noted professional attainment by Alois F. Kovářík distinguished graduate of the University of Minnesota, professor of physics at Yale University, pioneer investigator of radio activity and ionization of gasses, whose studies range from nuclear physics to submarine detection, receipt of international acclaim for service and attainment, deem him to be worthy of special commendation for outstanding achievement."

Professor Kovářík was recognized throughout the world as an authoritative expert in many fields and on many topics. During his half-century career, his research interests included mobility of ions in gasses, absorption and reflection of beta particles, periods of radioactive substances, atomic recoil, statistical methods for alpha and beta particles, and gamma and x rays. Besides his extraordinary knowledge in the areas of physics and chemistry, disciplines in which he excelled in both research and education, we will see, later in this paper, that he was a notable Czech patriot and statesman as well.

### **First scientific and research publication at age 19:** **Decorah Ice Cave 1898 – on the formation of glaciers**

The Ice cave at Decorah, Iowa, is the largest known glacier in North America east of the Black Hills and was the subject of much international speculation during the latter half of the nineteenth century. In 1860, only 12 years after the first white settlers arrived in the area, a note was published in the *Scientific American* commenting on the unusual behavior of the cave. Over the next 40 years a long series of articles in this and other scientific publications speculated on the possible mechanisms of ice formation and brought international recognition to the cave. The series culminated in an article in 1898 in the *Scientific American Supplement* by Alois Kovářík, who proposed a mechanism which was accepted by the leading authorities of the day and which still seems to be the most reasonable explanation of the phenomenon.

Over a three-year period, 1897-99, Alois Kovářík made frequent observations at the cave, collected meteorological information and published the data in articles... He explained that cold air circulates freely through the cave in winter, cooling the rocks to a temperature below the freezing point of water. The warmed air ascends out of the cave through fissures in the roof. Moisture in the air produces a coating of hoarfrost (a deposit of needle-like ice crystals formed on the ground by direct condensation at temperatures below the freezing point) in some locations but production of thick layers of ice must await the arrival of water following a thawing of the bluff surface above. Since the mouth of the cave is higher than the ice chamber, cold air is trapped in the interior. In the summer, there is little circulation to bring in heat, and ice is able to persist until August or September.

Kovářík, who was born in Spillville, about twelve miles from Decorah, was an 18-year-old instructor in the Decorah Institute when he made his observations and published his first scientific paper. His reports on the Ice Cave were the first of a long series of scientific publications, as he went on to...achieve international recognition as a nuclear physicist while a professor at Yale University.

For more on Ice Caves see: Edwin Swift Balch *Glacières; or, Freezing Caverns*  
<https://scholarworks.uni.edu/pias/vol80/iss4/8/>  
<https://winnesheekcounty.iowa.gov/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/96-00477-Decorah-Ice-Cave-NR.pdf>

### **Contributions During the World Wars:**

Throughout World War I, Dr. Kovářík was a member of an important federal government panel studying counter-measures against German submarines.

During the course of World War II, Dr. Kovářík was one of the nuclear scientists assembled for highly secret work on the development of the atomic bomb. It was Known as the Manhattan Project, the code name for the American-led effort to develop a functional atomic weapon. The controversial creation and eventual use of the atomic bomb engaged some of the world's leading scientific minds, as well as the U.S. military; most of the work was done in Los Alamos, New Mexico, not the borough of New York City for which it was originally named. The Manhattan Project was started in response to fears that German scientists had been working on a weapon using nuclear technology since the 1930s—and that Adolf Hitler was prepared to use it.

### **Calculating the Age of the Earth:**

Professor Kovářík was among the first scientists to gauge the age of the Earth through the "radioactivity clock method." In 1930, speaking before the Connecticut Academy of Arts and Sciences, he gave his estimate of the minimum age of the Earth to be 1,852,000,000 years, based on his study of the disintegration of uranium into lead. Prior to that revelation, leading scientists of the day were convinced the earth was much younger. In 1897 Lord Kelvin gave an estimate "that the earth was more than 20, and less than 40 million years old, and probably much nearer 20 than 40". In 1899 and 1900, noted Irish physicist and geologist John Joly, calculated the rate at which the oceans should have accumulated salt from erosion processes, and determined that the oceans were about 80 to 100 million years old.

### **Publications:**

Between 1908 and 1953 Dr. Kovářík published 27 works in 46 publications in 2 languages; English and Czech. Additionally, his correspondence, writings, lecture notes and slides on radioactive materials reside in the Yale University archives and constitute 15 boxes (7 linear feet).

Throughout his illustrious career Dr. Kovářík collaborated and did developmental research with numerous noted scientists of his day, including:

- Marie Salomea Skłodowska Curie (Madame Curie): Known for Pioneering research on radioactivity and discovering polonium and radium. She won two Nobel prizes; one in Physics and one in Chemistry.
- Hans Geiger: The German physicist Hans Wilhelm Geiger is best known as the inventor of the Geiger counter to measure radiation. In 1908, Geiger introduced the first successful detector of individual alpha particles. Later versions of this counter were able to count beta particles and other ionizing radiation. The introduction in July 1928 of the Geiger-Müller counter marked the introduction of modern electrical devices into radiation research.

### **Birth of a Nation – The Iowa connection**

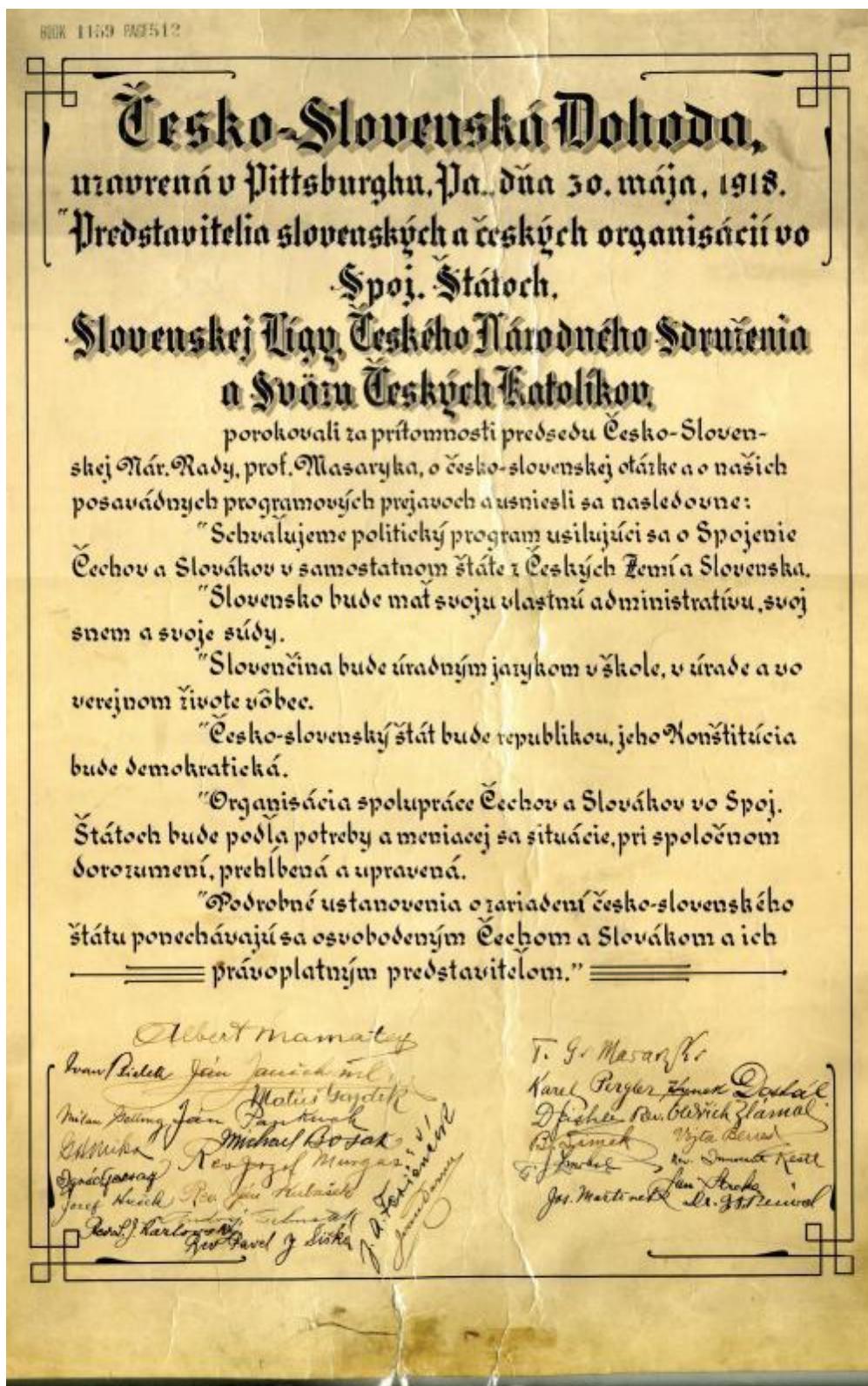
The lands referred to today as Bohemia, or Czechoslovakia, or The Czech Republic, were mentioned by the Romans as far back as 200 BC. Wikipedia provides a post BC summary of the Bohemian / Czech lands as follows: The Duchy of Bohemia was established in 870 and raised to the Kingdom of Bohemia in 1198. Several Bohemian monarchs ruled as non-hereditary kings beforehand, first gaining the title in 1085.

From 1004 to 1806, Bohemia was part of the Holy Roman Empire, and its ruler was an elector. During 1526–1804 the Kingdom of Bohemia, together with the other lands of the Bohemian Crown, was ruled under a personal union (A personal union is the combination of two or more states that have the same monarch while their boundaries, laws, and interests remain distinct) as part of the Habsburg Monarchy. From 1804 to 1918, Bohemia was part of the Empire of Austria, which itself was part of the dual monarchy of Austria-Hungary from 1867 to 1918.

Thus, prior to 1918 the Bohemian lands were not a nation of independent rule. However, following the dissolution of the Austrian monarchy, the Bohemian lands, now also referred to as Czech lands, became part of Czechoslovakia, and they have formed much of today's Czech Republic since 1993. In summary, Bohemia was not an independently governed nation from 1526 until 1918. Bohemia suffered under serfdom until 1848. This author's great great grandfather and Klimeš ancestors, were in fact, serfs of the Bishops and Archbishops of Prague.

So why is this even mentioned in a paper about Alois Francis Kovářík PhD? Professor Kovářík's genius was not limited to Physics, Chemistry and the sciences. At a time when numerous men and women were actively pursuing support for an independent Czech nation, Professor Kovářík was actively participating with the leaders of that movement. In 1916, a group of Slavic nationalists, Professor Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk who On Nov. 14, 1918, would be elected the

first president of Czechoslovakia, and who would be reelected in 1920, 1927, and 1934, Czech attorney Edvard Beneš, who from 1918 to 1935 would be the uninterrupted Foreign Minister of Czechoslovakia under President Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk, and who in 1935 became Masaryk's successor as President, and renowned Slovak astronomer General Ph.D. Milan Rastislav Štefánik, who on 4 May 1919, died in an airplane crash, met when in Paris to promote independence for a Czechoslovak State.



They formed the Czechoslovak National Council, whereupon Austria immediately declared them traitors. Beneš promoted their cause in London and Paris. Štefánik championed independence in France and Italy. Masaryk traveled throughout Europe. In May, 1918, Masaryk came to the United States to enlist American support for the proposed new nation; including that of President Wilson and his Secretary of State Robert Lansing.

On May 31, 1918 the Pittsburgh Agreement (shown below) was signed by 29 individuals: (12) Czechs, and (17) Slovaks. The agreement declared the intent of the American representatives of Bohemia, Moravia, Slovakia, and Czech Silesia, to create an independent state to be known as *Czecho-Slovakia* (as spelled in the document) and is often compared to the United States' Declaration of Independence

You can clearly see the following signatures under that of Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk; Karel Pergler, Hynek Dostal and Bohumil Šimek. Why mention them here? They have direct ties to the Spillville / Protivin, Iowa area and therefore Professor Kovářík. Additionally, they were instrumental in the formation of the Czech lands into an independent, democratic and self-governing nation. Of the 12 Czech signatures on this document, four have direct or indirect ties to Spillville, Protivin or Iowa. Thus 3 of the 12 Czech signatures, or 25%, were closely tied to our little corner of the world. We do not know why Alois Kovářík was not a signer.

Masaryk's own signature on the document made it an official declaration of the Czechoslovak National Council. Subsequently, the Pittsburgh Agreement was presented to Secretary of State Lansing, then to President Wilson himself at a meeting with Masaryk on June 19, 1918. On June 28, 1918 the State Department issued a strong statement supporting the freedom of the Slavic people from Austro-Hungarian rule. Shortly thereafter, Britain and France recognized Czechoslovakia as an Allied nation, with the Czechoslovak National Council as its official governing body. The United States extended recognition in September 1918.

**Hynek Dostal:** In 1898 JUDr. Dostal intended to take a position in Vienna when he received a telegram from his brother Father Joseph Dostal. At that time Father Dostal was serving as pastor for St. Wenceslaus parish in Spillville, Iowa. The telegram urgently requested Hynek to come to America and teach at the Czech parochial school in Spillville. Thus, at age 27 JUDr. Hynek Dostal, like many of his countrymen, left his homeland for a new life in America. JUDr. Dostal taught at the St. Wenceslaus Parochial school for two years; 1898-1900. Hynek was married by his brother in St. Wenceslaus Church in 1889. In 1900, Archbishop Keane of the Dubuque Diocese issued an order stating that nuns must teach at all parochial schools. Forced out of his job, Hynek moved to Chicago where he was associate editor of the daily paper, *Narod* (Nation). He later moved to St. Louis from where he published the newspaper *Hlas* (Voice). For much of the time between 1900 to 1918 Dr. Dostal devoted the majority of his life to the establishment of a free and democratic Czech – Slovak nation.



**Karel Pergler:** From 1908 to 1917 he worked as an attorney in the Protivin / Cresco, Iowa area.



He was a signer of the 1918 Pittsburgh Pact along with Hynek Dostal and Bohumil Shimek, a famous Iowa botanist. (That Štefánik did not sign was due to his being in Italy.) Why Alois Kovářík was not a signer is not known. Pergler went on to be a diplomat for the new Czechoslovakia including being the first Ambassador of Czechoslovakia to the United States. In 1910 he was an incorporator of the Bohemian Savings Bank in Protivin. Numerous papers of Pergler's are stored in the Georgetown University archives including 10 reports and letters regarding Charles Pergler's lobbying efforts in the U.S. Senate to have Czechoslovakia's independence recognized and supported.

There is a direct and personal connection between this freedom fighter and Dr. Alois Francis Kovářík



Milan Rastislav Štefánik (born July 21, 1880 in Košariská (Kosaras) Slovakia, – died in an airplane crash on May 4, 1919 in Ivanka pri Dunaji, Czechoslovakia) was a Slovak politician, diplomat, and astronomer. During World War I, he was General of the French Army, at the same time the Slovak Minister of War, one of the leading members of the Czechoslovak National Council (i.e., resistance government), and he contributed decisively to the cause of Czechoslovak sovereignty. Together with Tomáš Garrigu Masaryk and Edvard Beneš he was a key figure in the founding of Czechoslovakia. Štefánik was the Deputy Chairman of the Czechoslovak National Council, Minister of War in the Provisional Government of Czechoslovakia and subsequently in the newly formed Czechoslovakia. It is known that a meeting was held in Spillville, Iowa between Dr. Kovářík, Karel Pergler and General PhDr. Milan Rastislav Štefánik during the summer of 1917. The subject matter of that meeting is not known.

For a detailed account of the life of Milan-Rastislav-Štefánik see  
[www.geni.com/people/Milan-Rastislav-Štefánik/6000000048112225837](http://www.geni.com/people/Milan-Rastislav-Štefánik/6000000048112225837)

[https://sk-m-wikipedia-org.translate.goog/wiki/Milan\\_Rastislav\\_%C5%A0tef%C3%A1nik?\\_x\\_tr\\_sl=sk&\\_x\\_tr\\_tl=en&\\_x\\_tr\\_hl=en&\\_x\\_tr\\_pto=sc](https://sk-m-wikipedia-org.translate.goog/wiki/Milan_Rastislav_%C5%A0tef%C3%A1nik?_x_tr_sl=sk&_x_tr_tl=en&_x_tr_hl=en&_x_tr_pto=sc)

Bohumil Shimek (Šimek) (June 25, 1861 – January 30, 1937) was an American naturalist, conservationist, and a professor at the University of Iowa. While Shimek's ties to the Spillville / Protivin area are not strong, he was however an Iowa signer of the 1918 Pittsburg Agreement and did spend a large amount of time in Winneshiek County, Dr. Kovářík's home county, studying nature. In 1906 he published a 96-page book on The Fauna of Winneshiek County. Shimek worked for the independence of Czechoslovakia with his personal friend, Thomas G. Masaryk. Dr. Šimek, like so many Czech patriots, wrote eloquent papers of Why Bohemia Deserves Freedom adding to the justification for an independent Czech nation.

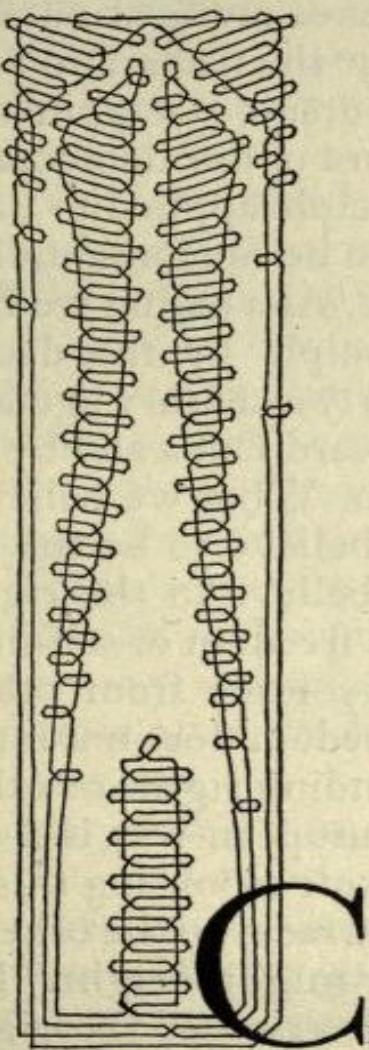


The Shimek State Forest in far south east Iowa is named in his honor. He was awarded an honorary Ph.D. in recognition of his scientific contributions. He was also awarded a special Czech medal of honor in 1927. For more information, the full copy of Why Bohemia Deserves Freedom, and its' inclusion in a larger document, A Study of the Ideals and Aspirations of the Bohemian and Slovak Peoples, as they relate to and are affected by the great European War edited by Thomas Čapek who was variously a journalist, legislator, lawyer, banker and author, see the below links:

[https://www.gutenberg.org/files/45993/45993-h/45993-h.htm#Page\\_123](https://www.gutenberg.org/files/45993/45993-h/45993-h.htm#Page_123)  
<https://upperiowariver.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/Flora-of-Winneshiek-County-Shimek.pdf>  
<https://www.gutenberg.org/files/45993/45993-h/45993-h.htm>

Now for the tangible reason for including the above section on the Pittsburgh Agreement and its signers in a paper on Professor Kovářík. The quest for a Czech independent and free nation was a long and difficult one. It involved hundreds, possibly thousands or even many more doing their part, large or small.

On December 11, 1916, "The Heart of Europe", an address delivered by Charles Pergler in Washington D C. at a conference of oppressed or Dependent Nationalities begins with a Forward by Professor Alois F. Kovářík PhD., D.Sc, Yale University." Based on its insight, relevance and articulation I have included the forward in this paper. There could not be a better document to demonstrate the full breath of Professor Kovářík's political acumen coupled with his scientific brilliance. Now is the perfect time to present a facet of his life that is not often mentioned, or is little known. Therefore, I opt to include the topic here, he was truly a unique, gifted and extraordinary individual.



#### FOREWORD

Civilization cannot make true progress without liberty and justice, and it needs peace as well. Without liberty and justice, however, peace is ephemeral. Without peace, progress is or at least seems to be slow. Yet history offers plenty of examples of various social struggles and wars fought to establish the rights of man as an individual and the rights of nations as collective units with the resulting greater progress during the peace periods that followed such struggles. History also gives us examples of "might is right" with the resulting retarding

influence on the progress of civilization. As American citizens we consider the declaration of our right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness as the corner-stone of the structure of our democratic form of government. This principle applied to us as individuals we firmly believe to be fundamentally necessary when applied to nations. As a nation we have proved our belief in this principle by the declaration of Monroe's Doctrine nearly a century ago as well as by our recent behavior toward Cuba and by our present attitude toward Mexico. What we believe to be the truth for ourselves we believe to be the truth when applied to others. We believe in the right of every nation to life and to the freedom of self-development without interference by force from other nations, provided that such a freedom does not interfere with or violate the corresponding rights of other nations. The present great European war is a conflict between races on the one side espousing this liberal and democratic principle and races on the other side boastfully proclaiming that "might is right." It is a struggle of races for the possession of the right to their individuality—their national soul—against races denying the weak nations the same right to live as the strong nations. Prussia's history is a history of conquest, of Germanization, and of preparations for more conquest and Germanization. Even with a knowledge but not a full realization of these facts, the world generally, previous to this war, would have resented on behalf of the German race any insinuation that such crimes as have been committed by the Germans in this war could be claimed to be possible of perpet-

tration by them. During this war, however, the true earmarks of the national character of the Prussianized Germans have become amply known to the world. The world can well form its own judgment about a race that can celebrate and have its school children participate in the celebration of the sinking of the Lusitania! What rights and justice can a conquered nation expect from such a race? The forcible expatriation of the Poles by Prussia in the years preceding the great war as well as the Prussian behavior in Belgium and northern France since the beginning of the war makes Prussia a proper ally of Austria and of Turkey, whose Serbian and Armenian crimes are only a continuation of their histories so replete with murder, oppression, and injustice. ~~A~~ Austria's treatment of Bohemia after the Bohemian period of the thirty years' war was one of constant forcible expatriation, murder, and attempts at a complete annihilation of the Bohemian people. Her continued fearful oppression and enslavement of the Bohemian people for two centuries and her untiring zeal to destroy all the cultural products of centuries of the Bohemian people, especially their literature, and to erase the glorious history of Bohemia from the pages of history of the nations of the world was the application of "might is right" of victorious German Austria over Bohemia. Were it not for the fact that the blessings flowing from the French Revolution spread over Bohemia, as well as over Europe generally, it is not unlikely that Austria would have continued her fearful rule in Bohemia during the past century as she carried it on during the two preceding

centuries. Austria's moderation in her persecution was not due to any change of her innate nature, but was rather the result of general European pressure in favor of humanity and toleration and also due partly to dynastic fears. Austria's practised motto ever has been *Oppression and Injustice*. ¶ Under a misrule such as Austria is guilty of over the various peoples of her empire, the peace and progress loving Bohemian race cannot and will not forever remain. In the last half century during which the Bohemian people wrested a small portion of their inherent rights of self-development, they have produced an enviable literature, they have advanced science in all its branches, they have contributed wealth to music and art. Through their own efforts against odds, they have placed themselves as the leading intellectual people in Austria-Hungary. Among them illiteracy is practically unknown. ¶ A race with such a strong determination and character has a true and real soul. The Bohemian race to-day is worthy of its illustrious past; it is worthy of its national heroes, Hus, Comenius, and Havlicek. It has the right to self-development unhindered by an undesirable patriarchal government of its German neighbors. It has a right to absolute independence, political as well as cultural. It is hoped that this war may bring, among other things, an end to the vicious rule of minority over majority, of Austrian Germans over the Bohemians, and of the Magyars over the Slovaks and the Serbs.

ALOIS F. KOVARIK

*New Haven, Conn., January 20, 1917*

If you would like to read the entire document, see:

<https://archive.org/details/heartofeuropeadd00pergrich/page/n5/mode/2up>

For additional information on events leading up to the signing of the Pittsburgh Agreement see

<http://rusyncenter.blogspot.com/2018/06/the-pittsburgh-agreement.html>

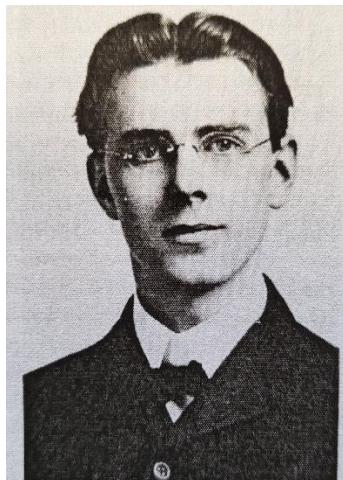
<https://www.c-rs.org/resources/Documents/NRT%20Summer%202018.pdf> beginning on Page 14

### **Conclusion:**



In December of 1953, while still doing research work in atomic development at Yale University laboratories, Professor Kovářík was seriously injured in an automobile accident in New Haven, Connecticut. He suffered a compound leg fracture (two bones broken), as well as three breaks in his shoulder. There are those that conjecture it was an assassination attempt linked to his work in atomic energy. Be that as it may, after his recovery at St.

Raphael's hospital in New Haven, Connecticut, in 1954 he moved back to Spillville where he lived out the remainder of his life. On November 13, 1965 he died and is buried in St. Wenceslaus cemetery.



**A.F Kovářík Ph. D.  
Ca. 1900 age 20**

I am proud to say that my family ancestry includes the Kovářík's. Dr. Alois Kovářík was my grandmother's (Otilla Kovářík Haug) uncle. That would make Alois my third cousin or gran gran uncle. May he rest in peace.

**Pioneer Church Families of Festina and St. Lucas**  
**By Joe Tillman**

**Festina Church Members 1857 List**

Andres, Joseph Sr.	Martinek, Thomas
Bauhaus, Bernard Sr.	McGary, John
Bechel, Sebastian	McManus, Hugh
Boyle, Bernard Sr.	McManus, John
Brockamp, Herman	McManus, Phillip
Broemmelting, George	Meirick, Bernard
Bruckner, Mathias	Meyer, Andrew
Centlivre, Charles	Moellers, Heinrich
Collins, John Sr.	Murphy, Thomas
Cremer, William Sr.	Pieper, Henry
Doerr, William Sr.	Puttmann, Bernard
Drees, Friederich	Rademaker, Bernard
Drees, Michael	Schissel, Peter Sr.
Dreyel, George	Scheidemantel, Heinrich
Eimers, Frederick	Schneberger, George.
Eimers, William	Schneberger, Michael
Eppel, Andrew	Scholbrock, Henry Sr.
Etteldorf, Phillip Sr.	Schones, Frederick
Ferkinghoff, Theodore	Schones, Henry
Freiech, Herman Sr.	Schreier, Herman
Funke, Clemens	Schulze, Theodore Sr.
Gaertner, Johann	Schupanitz, John
Gerlemann, William Sr.	Spillman, Phillip
Gehling, Heinrich Sr.	Stribley, Adolph
Giesing, Joseph	Sudtelgte, Bernard
Hess, Charles	Timp, Theodore Sr.
Holthaus, Herman	Uhlenhake, Ferdinand
Holthaus, Theodor	Unger, Friederich
Holthaus, William	Werner, Christopher
Huinker, Heinrich	Wimber, Franz
Kabeisemann, William Sr.	Zweibahmer, Herman Sr.
Kopet, Wenzil	
Krauss, George	
Krysan, Frank	

(Names not located)

Leard, John	Balzer, John
Lensing, Johann	Daldrup, E.
Lensing, Lewis	Gallagher, Bernard
Lensing, Wenzil	Moore
Lone, Michael	Schmid, John
Marr, Henry	Slone

### **Festina Settlers Via Wisconsin**

1857 Festina Church members with Racine or Kenosha County Ties.  
(Ties = place of marriage, residence, and/or birth)

Note: The presentation for the St. Lucas Historical Society listed 11 people from WI to St. Lucas..

Broemmeling, George  
 Cremer, William Sr.  
 Eimers, Frederick  
 Etteldorf, Phillip  
 Freiech, Herman Sr.  
 Gehling, Henry Sr.  
 Giesing, Joseph  
 Hess, Charles  
 Holthaus, Herman  
 Holthaus, Theodor  
 Holthaus, William  
 Lensing, Johann  
 Lensing, Lewis  
 Lensing, Wenzil  
 Meirick, Bernard  
 Pieper, Henry  
 Puttmann, Bernard  
 Scheidemantel, Heinrich  
 Scholbrock, Heinrich  
 Schones, Frederick  
 Schones, Henry  
 Timp, Theodore Sr.  
 Uhlenhake, Ferdinand  
 Wimber, Francis

This list doesn't include other Festina settlers who arrived from Wisconsin after 1857. I know that Henry Kipp & Friederich Tillmann also lived in Wisconsin before arriving at Festina.

### **Old Mission Area Czech Settlers**

#### **1854 Arrivals**

The first 6 settlers arrived in Spring.

Ignatz Benda	b. 1825	Hansa
Frank Bouska	b. 1810	Hansa
Martin Bouska	b. 1808	Hansa
Wenzil Kopet	b. 1811	Patriot
Joseph Linhart	b. 1802	Hansa
Joseph Zahasky	b. 1807	Hansa

The second group of settlers arrived early Summer.

John Doubek	b. 1808	Hansa
Thomas Kruchek	b. 1804	Hansa
Jacob Malek	b. 1807	
Wenzil Mikesh	b. 1820	
John Novak	b. 1810	
Thomas Peterka	b. 1810	Hansa

The third group of settlers arrived before the end of the year.

John Hayek	b. 1827	Hansa
Thomas Martinek	b. 1816	
John Mikesh	b. 1823	
Wenzil Slepicka	b. 1813	
Francis Swehla	b. 1813	
Frank Swehla	b. 1813	
Frank Taylor	b. 1817	Hansa (Krejci)
Frank Valenta	b.	
Andrew Vojek	b.	
Mathias Zbornik	b. 1818	Patriot

The Patriot had 202 passengers. The Hansa had 224 passengers.

## St. Luke's Church Pioneer Members

Duclos, Mathias  
Foreman, Herman  
Kruse, George  
Kuennen, Gerhard Heinrich  
Limke, Hermann  
Meyer, Caspar Heinrich  
Meyer (Myers), Herman H.  
Meyer, Johann Heinrich  
Nieman (Niemann), John  
Pitzenberger, Andrew  
Razabek (Rasenbeck), Frank  
Reicks, Theodore  
Schneberger (Schneeberger), Joseph  
Stathel, Anton  
Steffes, Johan  
Vondersitt, Antone  
Wessling, John  
Witte, John Melchoir  
Wurzer, Michael

(Unable to locate information)

Kraemer, Andrew  
Toenjes, Lucas

Notes: I used the following information to determine the list of members.

1. An Iowa Pioneer is defined by the Iowa Genealogical Society as a person who lived in Iowa in 1856 or before.
2. I used the 1856 Iowa Census for Auburn Twp., Fayette, Iowa, and Washington Twp., Winneshiek, Iowa.
3. 125 Years: St. Luke's Church (1855-1980) I used information found on pages 16 & 24.

Even though Joseph Schneberger lived in Festina, he contributed to a collection to build the church in St. Lucas. Joseph owned a general store in Festina.

There is a brief family biography for each of those listed above. I have listed information about where these families lived before arriving at St. Lucas. I have included data that I could verify. Above all, I hope that what I have compiled will be of interest to you.

### St. Luke's Church: Selected Pioneer Members Bios

**Mathias Duclos** (1818-1913) b. Kaltenhausen, Bas-Rhin, Alsace, France.  
bur. St. Lucas, Ia.

Juliana Stathel (1825-1901) b. Berg Kaudel, Pfalz, Bavaria, Germany.  
bur. St. Lucas, Ia.

Mathias immigrated to the U.S. in 1826 & Juliana in 1835.

Married: 1844 at Oldenburg, Indiana.

They arrived in Iowa in 1850. (Iowa 1856 Census)

#### CHILDREN:

**Mathias** (1847-1854) b. Oldenburg, Indiana. bur. St. Lucas, Fayette, Ia.

**Mary** (1848?-1867) b. Oldenburg, Indiana. bur. St. Lucas, Ia.

**Juliana** (1850-1912) b. St. Lucas. bur. Festina, Ia.

Married: Nikolaus Buchheit.

**Philomena** (1852-1959) b. St. Lucas. bur. St. Lucas, Ia.

**Anton** (1853-1935) b. St. Lucas. bur. Freeport, Stearns, Mn.

Married: Barbara Rosenbaum.

**Louis** (1856-1928) b. St. Lucas. bur. St. Lucas

Married: Caroline Zweibohmer.

**Frances** (1859-1923) b. St. Lucas. bur. Salem, McCook, SD.

Married: Dominic Bies.

**Anna Rose** (1861-1943) b. St. Lucas. bur. Salem, McCook, SD.

Married: John Bies.

**Mathias** (1862-1934) b. St. Lucas. bur. Cottonwood, Idaho, Idaho.

Married: Mary Bies.

**Magdalena** (1863-1940) b. St. Lucas. bur. St. Lucas.

Married: Thomas Sloan.

**Elizabeth** (1866-1879) b. St. Lucas. bur. St. Lucas.

**Nicholas.** (1868?-1878) b. St. Lucas. bur. St. Lucas.

**Barbara** (1870-1955) b. St. Lucas. bur. St. Lucas.

Married: Nikolaus Winter.

Notes: This family has conflicting information between Census records, family trees & tombstone inscriptions.



**Mathias Duclos** and **Louis Duclos** have a biography in the Fayette County Iowa, Biography Directory (March 1891). Both biographies are very interesting.

Louis owned a hotel and livery in St. Lucas. (The biographies can be found online at the IAGenWeb Project for Fayette County. Mathias page 257 and Louis page 210.)

**Herman Foreman** (1812-1880) b. Germany. bur. Fort Atkinson, Winneshiek, Iowa.

Clarissa Phillipu (1795-1884) b. Pennsylvania. bur. St. Lucas, Fayette, Iowa.

They arrived in Iowa in 1855. (Iowa 1856 Census)

Children:

**John Henry** (1842-1922) b. Alleghany, Pa. bur. St. Lucas, Ia. mar. Mary Zbornik.

Bernard (1851-?) b. Alleghany, Pa. bur. St. Lucas?

**Cecilia** (1852-1885) b. Baldwin, Alleghany, Pa. bur. St. Lucas. mar. Herman Heinrich Kuennen

**Barnard "Barney" Foreman** (1825?- 1885+) b. Germany. bur. ?

Barney is listed in the 1850, 1860 & 1870 Federal Censuses living with the Herman Foreman family. Barney is listed in the 1856 Iowa Census with the Foreman family. He is listed living alone in the 1885 Iowa Census. Barney was a master carpenter. (Maybe the younger brother of Herman?)

Notes: The Herman Foreman family was listed in the 1840 & 1850 Federal Censuses living in Allegheny County, Pa. The 1850 Census listed Herman's occupation as a grocer

**George Kruse** (1817-1912) b. Ahaus, Borken, Nordrhein-Westfalia, Germany. bur. St. Lucas.

Maria Anna Wichman (1831-1909) b. Bartmannsholte, Essen, Lower Saxony, Germany.

bur. St. Lucas. Both George & Maria immigrated to the U.S. in 1844. mar. 1850 Pennsylvania.

They arrived in Iowa in 1853. (Iowa 1856 Census)

CHILDREN:

**Henry** (1852-1928) b. Pittsburgh, Allegheny, Pa. bur. St. Lucas. mar. Susanna Werner.

**Joseph** (1854-1934) b. Washington Twp., Winneshiek, Ia. bur. St. Lucas.

mar. Philomena Kramer.

**John** (1856-1944) b Washington Twp., bur. Waucoma, Iowa. mar. Rosalia Pitzenberger.

**Margaret** (1859-1887) b. Washington Twp. bur. St. Lucas. mar. Johann Schmitt.

**Anton** (1867-1927) b. Washington Twp. bur. St. Lucas. mar. Mary Lichter.

**Bernard** (1874-1960) b. Washington Twp. bur. St. Lucas. mar. Margaret Steffes.



Picture is from 1893-94 of H. H. Kuennen  
(born 1834 in Germany, came to America at age 17, died 1919 St. Lucas)  
with his 3 oldest children and their spouses.

The couple closest to H.H. is his oldest daughter, Margaret, behind her is her husband, Clemens Mihm. They married in 1889. Maggie is holding their 3rd child, George Mihm. The child between Maggie and her father is Henry Mihm, and the child on H.H.'s lap is Anna Mihm, (she became Sister Beata Mihm).

The middle couple is John H. Kuennen, (H.H.'s 2nd child and oldest son) and, in front of him, his wife, Theresia Martin Kuennen. They married in September 1892.

Theresa is holding their first child, Barbara Kuennen (Mrs. Konrad Wurzer).

The couple on the right is H.H.'s 3rd child, Teresa Kuennen Martin. Behind her is her husband, Carl Martin. They married October of 1892. Theresa is holding their newborn, Barbara Martin. Barbara remained single.

H.H.'s wife, Gertrude Steffes Kuennen died at age 24. Their children, Margaret, John H., and Teresa were ages 5, 3, and 1 when their mother died.

Photo and text contributed by Rosemary Kuennen Most

**Gerhard Heinrich Kuennen** (1791-1881) b. Suhle, Oldenburg, Germany. bur. St. Lucas, Iowa.  
Maria Anna Tinnerman (1790-1850) b. Oldenburg, Germany. d. Oldenburg, Germany.

Gerhard & Maria Anna mar. 1817 at Lastrup, Oldenburg, Germany. Gerhard arrived in the U.S. 23 Oct. 1851, at Baltimore, Md. The family arrived in Iowa in 1852. (Iowa 1856 Census)

Children:

**Johan Heinrich “Prairie”** (1817-1879) b. Hemmelte, Oldenburg, Germany. bur. St. Lucas.

Married. Catherine Eckholt 2nd wife: Barbara Balk.

**Johan Gerhard** (1820-1850) b. Hemmelte, Germany. d. at sea on the way to the U.S.

**Mary** (1824-1880) b. Suhle, Germany. bur. St Lucas.

Married: Heinrich “JH” Meyer.

**Angela** (1826-1873) b. Hemmelte, Germany. bur. Decatur, Adams, Indiana.

Married. Johan Gerhard Hackman.

**Johan Wenzeslaus “J.W.”** (1830-1899) b. Hemmelte, Germany. bur. St. Lucas.

Married. Marie Bucheit.

**Henry “H.H.”** (1834-1919) b. Suhle, Germany. bur. St. Lucas.

Married: Thersia Bodensteiner. 2nd wife: Gertrude Steffes. 3rd wife: Cecelia Foreman.

**Johan Bernard (J.Barney”** (1827-1911) b. Lastrop, Germany. bur. St. Lucas.

Married: Catherine Meyer.

A special thanks to Bruce Kuennen for his help with this family.

**Theodore Reicks** (1813-1891) b. Rorup, Nordrhein-Westfalia, Germany.  
bur. St. Lucas, Iowa.

Franziska Woehler (1831-1873) b. Nienberge, Nordrhein-Westfalia, Ger.  
bur. St. Lucas, Ia.

Married: 1852 Nienberge, Ger.      Arrived in Iowa in 1854?



**Theodore Reicks**  
**Born August 4, 1813**  
**Died: January 23, 1891.**

**Both are buried in St. Luke Cemetery, St. Lucas, Iowa.**

**Franceska Woehler**  
**Born January 8, 1835**  
**Ded: February 17, 1873**

**Photo contributed by Elsie Reicks Svehla.**

CHILDREN:

**Bernard "Barney"** (1854-1945) b. St. Lucas, Ia. d. West Point, Cuming, Nebraska.

Married: Theresia Langreck 1875, St. Lucas, Ia.

**Mary** (1858-1937) b. St. Lucas, Ia. bur. St. Lucas, Ia.

Married: Johann Langreck 1875, St. Lucas.

**Anna** (1860-1935) b. St. Lucas, Ia. bur. Roselle, Carroll, Iowa.

Married: Adam Steffes 1877, St. Lucas, Ia.

**Henry** (1862-1941) b. St. Lucas, Ia. bur. St. Lucas, Ia

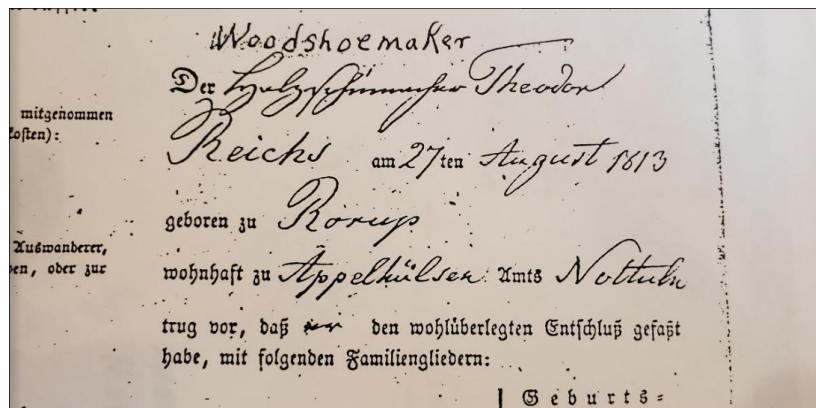
Married: Catherine Schmitt 1882, St. Lucas, Ia.

**Anton** (1866-1878) b. St. Lucas, Ia. bur. St. Lucas, Ia.

**Franziska** (1869-1894) b. St. Lucas, Ia. bur. St. Lucas, Ia.

Married: John Schmitt 1889, St. Lucas, Ia.

**Joseph** (1872-1872) b. St. Lucas, Ia. bur. St. Lucas, Ia.



Notes: There is a Theodore Rezabek listed in the book, 125 Years...St. Luke's Church.

I think there was a transcription error in the recording of names. There was a Theodore Reicks & Frank Rezabek living in the area. I think that the transcriber left out Reicks & Francis while typing the list, thus ending up with the name Theodore Rusabeck. Theodore is a common first name for a Westphalian German man.

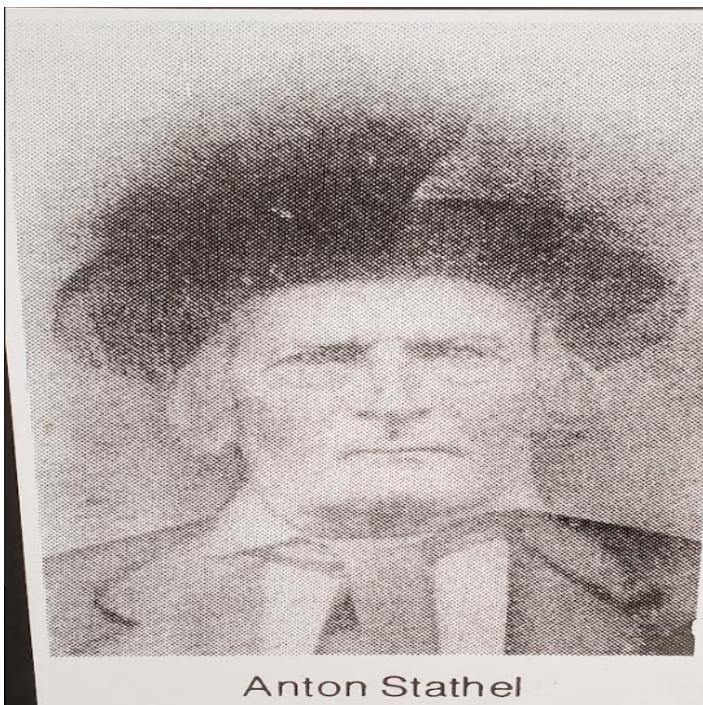
Elizabeth Woehler (1803-After 1885) is listed as Widow Woeler in the Special Collection of 1855. Elizabeth is the mother of Franziska Reicks. The Iowa 1856 Census lists Theodore as living in Iowa for 7 years. Probably a transcription error.

**Anton Stathel** (1808-1882) b. Altkrautheim, Bayern, Germany. bur. St. Lucas, Iowa.

Francisa Worst (1799-1880) b. Berg Kandel Bayern, Germany. bur. St. Lucas, Ia.

Married: 1832 Berg Kandel, Pfalz, Bayern, Germany.

Arrived in the U.S. in 1832 Baltimore, Md. Arrived in Iowa in 1849. (Iowa 1856 Census)



**Photo contributed by Joyce Schaufenbuel**

**CHILDREN:**

**Juliana** (1825-1901) b. Baricksburg, Germany. bur. St. Lucas.

Married: Mathias Duclos.

**Anthony** (1832-BET. 1865-1870) b. Oldenburg, Indiana. bur. St. Lucas?

Married: Maria Kommeda.

**Franziska** (1837-1914) b. Oldenburg, In. bur. St. Lucas.

Married: Sigmund Schaufenbuel.

**Magdalyn** (1842-1874) b. Oldenburg, In. bur. St. Lucas.

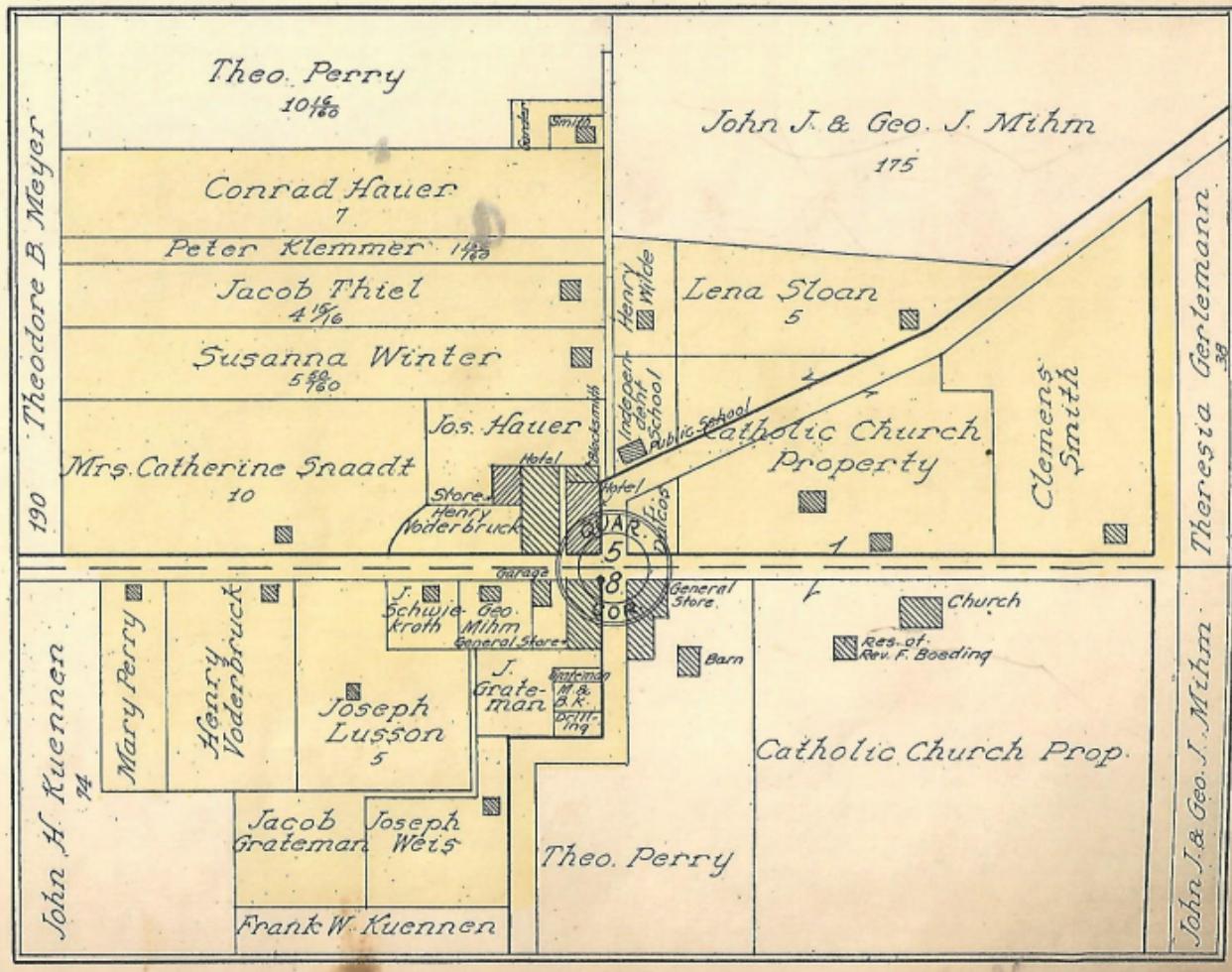
Married: Sigmund Schaufenbuel 1866.

# ST. LUCAS

FORMERLY OLD MISSION

AUBURN TWP.

Scale 100 ft. 1 Inch.



Fayette County Plat Book, 1916.

## Pioneers at St.Luke 50th Anniversary



Date: 18 October 1905. Place: St. Lucas, Iowa.

Back Row L to R: John Bernard Kuennen, Herman Heinrick Kuennen,  
George Henry Kruse, Anton Vondersitt, and Mathias Duclos.

Front row: Catherine Witte Gerleman, Francesca Stahel Schaufenbuel,  
.Anna Witte Meinert, Mary Meier Vondersitt.

Photo contributed by Helen Kruse Pinter.

German Wildflowers  
by H. Lünser, 1970s  
Contributed by Jessie Rhoads Duncan



*Arachis hypogaea L.*



*Arnica montana L.*



*Tussilago farfara L.*





Tafel 1 aus: *Arzneipflanzen*  
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Druck: A. Herrenk, Berlin



**DIVERSITY IN FAITH:  
AN INTRODUCTION TO THE REFORMATION AND PROTESTANTISM  
PART III:  
ANABAPTISM, MENNONITE, AMISH, AND HUTTERITE**

by  
**Russell P. Baldner**

In order to examine a third branch of Protestantism, Part III of this series returns to an already familiar time and place, early sixteenth-century Zürich, Switzerland.

**Anabaptism and Mennonite**

Among the proponents of change in Western Christianity in early sixteenth-century Europe were those who favored beliefs and practices which reached well beyond the reforms of Luther and Zwingli discussed in Parts I and II of this series. Although not always widely recognized, Luther and the church bearing his name represented a relatively conservative branch of the Reformation which, despite substantial differences with the Church of Rome, retained much of Catholic tradition. By contrast, Zwingli, Calvin and the Reformed Church represented a less traditional limb which adopted greater change. However, Anabaptism, a third major branch of Protestantism, occupied a position far to the left of both, one which in the sixteenth century was commonly viewed as radical.<sup>1</sup>

In January 1525, a small group of adult Christians gathered at the home of Felix Mantz in Zürich, Switzerland. Their concept of the church, membership in it, baptism, and the exercise of Christian faith contrasted sharply with that of the established church controlled in Zürich by the governing body of the city, the Council of Two Hundred. They were also disappointed when Zwingli had deferred to the wishes of municipal authorities and had not advocated more strongly for additional, more immediate reforms. As the group met, George Blaurock asked to be baptized by Conrad Grebel, who did so. Felix Mantz was also baptized, as were several others.<sup>2</sup>

As adult members of an established church, each already would have been baptized as an infant. In the eyes of many, such a second, adult baptism, whether of the Zürich believers or those who followed the same practice elsewhere, was an unorthodox departure not only from the Reformed Church of Zwingli in Zürich but also from Lutheranism and the Catholic Church as well, and was not looked upon kindly.<sup>3</sup> Mantz was subsequently drowned; others were burned. Opponents

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<sup>1</sup> Hostetler, *Amish Society*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1980), 26–27; Wallbank, Taylor, and Bailkey, *Civilization Past and Present*, vol. 1, 5th ed. (Chicago: Scott, Foresman and Company, 1965), 480.

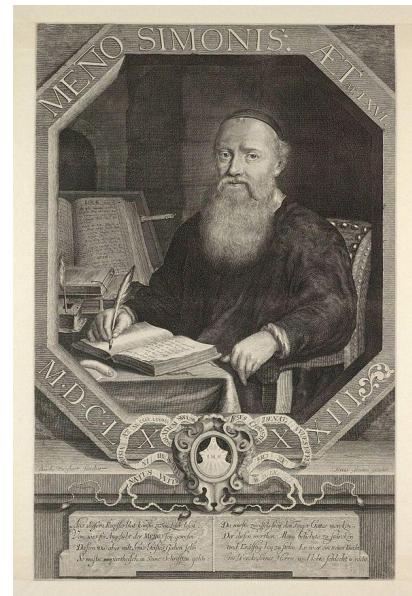
<sup>2</sup> Cornelius J. Dyck, ed., *An Introduction to Mennonite History: A Popular History of the Anabaptists and the Mennonites*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Scottsdale, Pennsylvania: Herald Press, 1981), 40–49; Hostetler, 27–28.

<sup>3</sup> Dyck, 43–44; Brad S. Gregory, *Rebel in the Ranks: Martin Luther, the Reformation, and the Conflicts That Continue to Shape our World* (New York: Harper One, HarperCollins Publishers, 2017), 118–121; Steven M. Nolt, *A History of the Amish* (Intercourse, Pennsylvania: Good Books, 199), 210.

applied a derisive term to those who, as adults, were baptized a second time: Anabaptism (Latin: *anabaptismus*), derived from Greek and meaning to re-baptize. In German, those who participated in a second, adult baptism were called *Wiedertäufer*, derived from *wieder*—again—and *taufen*—to baptize. The Swiss believers called themselves brethren—Swiss Brethren.<sup>4</sup>

Anabaptism was by no means limited to Switzerland. Appearing in other locations and at nearly the same time,<sup>5</sup> but varying in form from place to place, Anabaptist leaders and congregations arose in various parts of Germany, especially in the southwestern, central and northwestern regions, also in the Netherlands, Moravia, and elsewhere in Europe.<sup>6</sup> Among the leading figures of Anabaptism, one of the most prominent was Menno Simons, a priest from the Dutch province of Friesland, who was also active in the neighboring province of East Friesland in northwestern Germany and the German coastal area to the east, as well as the lower Rhine River region to the south. As a result of his leadership—and first name—his followers became known as Mennonites, a designation which gained widespread use beyond the Netherlands and northern Germany and came to be applied broadly to those of Anabaptist affiliation.<sup>7</sup>

Central to Anabaptist-Mennonite belief was the concept of the Christian church as a voluntary body of believers, free and independent of the state, who upon adult personal confession and commitment to their faith were baptized and accepted into membership. This stood in sharp contrast to an established church where universal membership was based on infant baptism. Adult believer's baptism was instead entered into with dedication and understanding; the baptism of infants was thought by Anabaptists to be meaningless.<sup>8</sup>



Menno Simons  
(Wikimedia Commons)  
(public domain)

<sup>4</sup> Dyck, 49–50; Merle and Phyllis Good, *20 Most Asked Questions about the Amish and Mennonites*, People's Place Book No. 1, rev. ed. (Intercourse, Pennsylvania: Good Books, 1995), 10; Hostetler, 27; Nolt, 10.

<sup>5</sup> Cornelius J. Dyck and Dennis D. Martin, *The Mennonite Encyclopedia: A Comprehensive Reference Work on the Anabaptist Movement*, 4 vols. (Hillsboro, Kansas: Mennonite Brethren Publishing House, 1955–1990), s. v. "Palatinate."

<sup>6</sup> Dyck, 62–135; Dyck and Martin, s. v. "Alsace," "Germany," "Palatinate," "Swiss Brethren"; Gregory, 119–120, 162–163; Nolt, 12–13.

<sup>7</sup> Dyck, 104–113, 117, 122–124; Good, 13; Hostetler, 29–30; Nolt, 15; Dorothy Schwieder, "Utopia in the Midwest: The Old Order Amish and the Hutterites," *Palimpsest* 54, no. 3 (1973): 10.

<sup>8</sup> Roland S. Bainton, *The Horizon History of Christianity* (New York: Avon Books, 1966), 277–279; Dyck, 43–49, 140–142; Good, 16; Gregory, 116–118; Hostetler, 26–28; Nolt, 8–9.



## Switzerland

(Wikimedia Commons public domain)

To the state, however, the independence and separation—the nonconformity—of Anabaptists from the prevailing political, religious, and social order represented a threat and led to persecution.<sup>9</sup> Although generally an alien concept to sixteenth-century Europeans, the Anabaptist-Mennonite view regarding the relationship between government and religion was essentially that of “separation of church and state,” a fundamental expressed, although not literally so named, more than two centuries later in the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States of America: “Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof.”<sup>10</sup>

In 1527, Swiss and southern German Anabaptists met at Schleitheim, a village near Schaffhausen next to the German-Swiss border in the northernmost corner of Switzerland. The meeting resulted in the *Brüderliche Vereinigung*,<sup>11</sup> a declaration of “Brotherly Union” or “brotherly understanding,” more commonly known as the Schleitheim Articles or Confession of Faith. Included in the seven articles of the Schleitheim agreement were provisions regarding believer’s baptism and the rejection of infant baptism, the ban or excommunication, the Lord’s Supper, rejection of oaths and violence, and separation from worldliness.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>9</sup> Dyck, 55–56; Gregory, 118–119; Hostetler, 30–31; Nolt, 9–11.

<sup>10</sup> Byron Preiss and David Osterlund, eds., *The Constitution of the United States of America*, The Bicentennial Keepsake Edition (Toronto, New York, London, Sydney, Auckland: Bantam Books, 1987), 51; Wallbank, Taylor, and Bailkey, 480.

<sup>11</sup> Dyck and Martin, “Germany,” 487.

<sup>12</sup> Dyck, 56–60; Good, 14–17; Hostetler, 28–29, 34; Nolt, 12–13.

Meeting a century later in the city of Dordrecht (Dordt, Dort), Netherlands, Dutch and northern Mennonites, in 1632, formulated a separate statement of faith, the Dordrecht Confession, which was to gain wide acceptance. Unlike the Swiss and southern German Schleitheim Confession, the Dordrecht Confession included articles concerning foot washing and social avoidance or shunning.<sup>13</sup> Article 17 declares:

As regards the withdrawing from, or the shunning of, those who are expelled, we believe and confess, that if any one, whether it be through a wicked life or perverse doctrine—is so far fallen as to be separated from God, and consequently rebuked by, and expelled from the church, he must also, according to the doctrine of Christ and His apostles, be shunned and avoided by all the members of the church particularly by those to whom his misdeeds are known, whether it be in eating or drinking, or other such like social matters. In short, that we are to have nothing to do with him.<sup>14</sup>

Facing intolerance, persecution and death because of their beliefs and the manner of expressing their faith, many Anabaptists, regardless of ethnicity or place, found it necessary to move or emigrate. Many of the Swiss Mennonites left their native land and emigrated northward, down the Rhine River valley into Alsace, now a region of northeastern France, and into southwestern Germany, especially the Palatinate. Among the seventeenth-century Swiss Mennonite diaspora was Jakob Ammann.<sup>15</sup>

### Amish

Ammann was born in Switzerland but emigrated to Alsace, historically a German-speaking region, settling at Markirch, southwest of Strasbourg, where he served as elder. Believing that Mennonite discipline and church life had become lax and weakened, Ammann, in 1693, proposed reforms and began to question and confront other Mennonite leaders regarding their position on matters of faith. These included communion, excommunication, and the practice of shunning or social avoidance (German: *Meidung*) of those expelled, excommunicated, from fellowship in the church.

Unlike Swiss Anabaptists who adhered to the Schleitheim Confession, which included excommunication, the Alsatians subscribed to the Dordrecht Confession which, in addition, specified shunning or social avoidance, as well as foot washing. Ammann advocated both, although the emphasis on shunning, the *Meidung*, which he required of fellow Mennonite believers, became a central and perhaps the most divisive issue. In addition, Ammann advocated simple, traditional, conservative dress, and was opposed to worldly personal grooming.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> Dyck, 132; Good, 24–25; Hostetler, 34–35; Nolt, 15–18.

<sup>14</sup> Hostetler, 34.

<sup>15</sup> Dyck, 63–92, 109, 113–120, 123, 146–150; Dyck and Martin, s. v. “Alsace,” “Germany,” “Palatinate,” “Swiss Brethren”; Hostetler, 31–32, 50–52; Nolt, 9–11, 19–22.

<sup>16</sup> Dyck, 148–149; Dyck and Martin, “Amish Division”; Milton Gascho, “The Amish Division of 1693–1697 in Switzerland and Alsace,” *The Mennonite Quarterly Review* 11, no. 4 (1937), 235–266; Hostetler, 31–43; John B.

Dialog between Ammann, his allies, and other Mennonite leaders revealed substantial religious differences which, unresolved, led to excommunications and a permanent schism among Mennonite communities in Alsace, Switzerland and the Palatinate region of southwestern Germany. Personal factors also may have contributed to the division. Of the sixty-nine ministers who took a position in the dispute, twenty-seven sided with Ammann. Of these, twenty-one were Alsatian, five Palatine German, and one Swiss. Those who adhered to the Ammann faction accordingly became known as Amish.<sup>17</sup>

Emigration of Mennonites and subsequently Amish to America began in 1683 and peaked in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Many initially settled in Pennsylvania and became part of the Pennsylvania (Dutch) German community. No Amish congregations, having retained their name, distinctive culture, and separate identity, remain in Europe.<sup>18</sup>

### Hutterite

Yet another branch of Anabaptism has early sixteenth-century roots in German-speaking Austrian lands and the Tyrol (western Austria) where believers also faced severe persecution. *Täuferjäger*—Anabaptist hunters—were recruited to find them; punishment followed, often death. Many Anabaptists fled to relative safety in more tolerant Moravia, the eastern portion of what is today the Czech Republic. Jacob Hutter, a Tyrolean native, provided effective leadership for the refugee Anabaptist settlements. In 1536, he was tried and burned at the stake. The significance of Hutter's contribution to the believers in Moravia is reflected in the name they adopted, *Hütterische Brüder*—Hutterian Brethren.<sup>19</sup>

A distinctive feature of the Hutterites, their more popular name, was and remains economic and social communism. In the clustered Hutterite colony—the *Bruderhof*—property was held in common and communal living was and remains the pattern of everyday life. Due to a diversity of skilled craftsmen, the colonies were to a large degree self-sufficient. Following expansion and several relocations in Europe, Hutterites emigrated in the 1870s to North America and established agricultural colonies on the Great Plains in North Dakota and Canada. In sharp contrast to the perhaps more familiar Old Order Amish in America, the Hutterian Brethren embrace modern agricultural machinery and new technology.<sup>20</sup>

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Mast, transl. and ed., *The Letters of the Amish Division of 1693-1711* (Oregon City, Oregon: Christian J. Schlabach, 1950), 3–107; Nolt, 26–28.

<sup>17</sup> Dyck, 148–149; Dyck and Martin, “Amish Division”; Gascho, 235–266; Hostetler, 33–49; Mast, 3–107; Nolt, 24–41.

<sup>18</sup> Hostetler, 50–71.

<sup>19</sup> Bainton, 281; Dyck, 71–77.

<sup>20</sup> Dyck, 77–82; Gregory, 162–163; Schwieder, 9, 13–23.

### **Closing Thoughts: Neighbors and Diversity in Faith in Northeast Iowa**

Each of the major faith traditions treated in Parts I, II, and III of this series is well represented in Iowa, including, more specifically, the northeastern portion of the state.

Depending on the community, Lutheran congregations are well represented, their origins commonly based on mid-nineteenth-century German or Scandinavian immigrant populations. In a larger denominational context, individual Lutheran congregations are organized into and maintain membership in separate independent national synods, likewise historically based on ethnic affiliation.

Presbyterian and United Church of Christ congregations represent, essentially or in part, the Calvinist, Reformed tradition and also may reflect, at least in part, nineteenth-century German immigrant roots. Reformed congregations are common in southeastern and northwestern Iowa communities having predominantly Dutch immigrant roots.

In more recent decades, Amish and Mennonite congregations have contributed to northeast Iowa's cultural mosaic and diversity of faith traditions. Both communities are of German linguistic stock whose roots reach back to Switzerland, Alsace, and Germany. The author is not aware of Hutterite communities in northeast Iowa or other regions of the state.

The primary goal of this three-part series, *Diversity in Faith: An Introduction to the Reformation and Protestantism*, has been to provide readers of *Historical Perspectives* a concise fundamental historical account of three primary branches of Protestantism, including respective origins, relationships to one another, and similarities and differences in heritage and expressions of faith. A second and concurrent purpose was to provide historical background and helpful context for intended future articles on individual Protestant congregations in northeast Iowa.

If in the preceding three installments, the reader of this series has gained greater insight into his or her neighbor and a better understanding and appreciation of fellow Americans who perchance share a lifestyle and manner of belief and faith unlike his own—but the very same air, soil, and blessings of creation—then the objectives of this series will have been met.

To all who read and pause to contemplate our diversity in faith, thank you!

RPB

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