

Addendum to the Pinter Family History Book

*An Embellished Story of the Life of
Heinrich and Elisabeth in Bavaria and in
America, until 1900*

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August 2023
Updated March 2024

Introduction

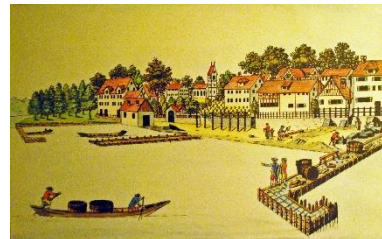
I have written much about the lives of my great-great-grandparents Heinrich Pünter and Elisabeth Hohenbrunner. Most of those writings are based on known facts at the point the papers were written, but they included a little speculation in areas where facts were sparse.

This paper will deviate from that format a bit. This will be a story of their lives and immigration and will be told based on historical data from others who lived in the same time frame but with the known facts of Heinrich and Elisabeth mixed in. In other words, I have added embellishments that are based on research I have done on the reality of life in their time, as best as I can determine.

Of course, we have no pictures of these people in the time frame that they lived in Europe, and we have nothing written by them that has survived all those years in Switzerland and Bavaria. All we can do is take what we know, add to that what we can gain by reading various other accounts of life in that time, and then combine that with paintings and drawings of people and places produced by others to produce a story of their lives.

First, Lets Review Heinrich's Early Life

Heinrich Pünter was born in the village of Stäfa in the Canton of Zurich in Switzerland in 1810. He was the third child born to Hans Jacob Pünter and Regula Wysling. Heinrich had an older sister, Barbara, age 4, and an older brother, Jacob, age 2, born in 1808 but may have died in 1809. Heinrich was four years when his mother died in 1814. Soon thereafter in 1814, his father, who had been left with two young children, married Magdalena



Furrer. Hans Jacob was 33 and Magdalena was 27 when they married. (He was 24 when he married Regula in 1805. She was 18.)

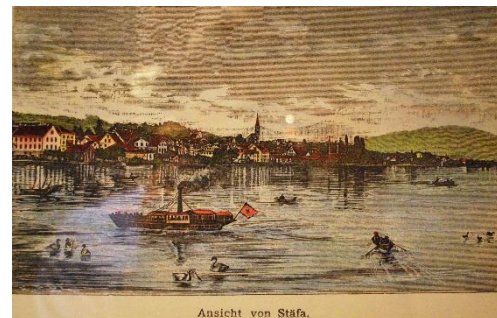
In about 1815, a brother Jacob was born. Heinrich was about 5 years old. Jacob would have been born in Bavaria.

Heinrich spent his first 7 years as an infant and child on the shores of Lake Zurich and then Bavaria. While the actual location of his home in Stäfa cannot be identified and has been, so far as we know, demolished, most of the town in the early 1800s is close to the water. This means it is somewhat flat and green. The village slopes upwards from the shore, slowly at first, and then more abruptly upward but did not become mountainous...simply hilly. The land is and was conducive to farming and today there a number of wineries there including the Pünter Weinbau owned by a distant relative.



Heinrich was of course too young while in Switzerland to work or participate in most of family chores and so he mostly did what small boys would do...play and romp around with the other small children of the village. Maybe he attended some schooling.

We do not know the occupation of Heinrich's father, Hans Jacob. This part of the Canton of Zurich was conducive to farming, so that is one possibility. But there were other occupations including wine making, tannery work, and fishing, as well as work that would be considered administrative or judicial. A number of other early family members were found to be judges of some kind. Nevertheless, we have no details on Hans Jacob's occupation.



All was not well, however, in Switzerland in general, and Stäfa in particular. The population outgrew its ability to feed itself. A major famine occurred in 1816 and 1817. Hans Jacob was one of many family heads who decided that he had enough of the conditions in his homeland. So, later in 1817, the family of five left Stäfa and migrated overland to what is now Bavaria in Germany. Heinrich was seven years old at the time.

It was a difficult decision to leave their deep roots in the Stäfa area, but it was necessitated in order to survive. The Pünter family line has been traced back to about 1550 in Stäfa. While many families decided to go to America, Hans Jacob chose Germany.

The trip was not an easy one. The straight-line distance from Stäfa to their eventual new home in Bavaria was around 160 miles. But, of course, some of that was over winding trails and dirt roads. On a modern aerial map, most of the terrain they might have travelled over is today flat with some trees and maybe hills. In the early 1800s, there might have been many more trees than today. At 5 miles per day, it would have taken them at least an entire month to make the journey. The family used one or more wagons to carry their family possessions and used horses or oxen to pull the wagons. They quite possibly travelled with other families trying to leave Switzerland. By the time they decided to stop and settle down, they found themselves in a flat to rolling, green, tree-filled region in southeastern Bavaria which was suitable for farming.



A Swiss church record in Stäfa recorded that Hans Jacob took a job as a Wegmacher, or literally pathmaker or waymaker, after arrival in Germany. This is a person who was employed by the State to keep a section of road open and in a state of good repair. It is thought that his assigned roadway was part of the road from Munich to the village of Rosenheim. It is also thought that his son Heinrich also was employed as a Wegmacher when he was old enough.



The next few paragraphs will discuss what little we know about Heinrich between 1817 and about 1838.

One Stäfa church record suggests that the family settled in a village named Feldkirchen. There are at least two Feldkirchens in Bavaria. One is half-way between Rosenheim and Munich on a road called Rosenheimerstrasse. The other is very close to Munich. The Stäfa church record says they worked on this road so we will assume the family settled in or near the Feldkirchen that is near Rosenheim.

The time between 1817 and 1838 is a period of some 21 years. Much can happen in 21 years. The period of the mid-1830s to about 1838 is the approximate time when Heinrich met Elizabeth Hohenbrunner. German males were required to serve in the military at age 20, but Heinrich was not a citizen, so his service is unknown.

Any number of events could have happened to Heinrich. Of course, we have no idea what occurred. First, he had to grow up to be an adult. Heinrich would have turned 18 in 1828. Before 1828, he was at home growing up and doing things that young kids would do in Bavaria. Perhaps this involved a job but was likely simply tending to household chores and maybe some schooling.

After age 18, he could have been participating in any number of endeavors:

- Maybe the family had a farm and he worked on this farm.
- Maybe he continued as a Wegmacher or other non-farming occupation.

- Maybe he joined the German military if that was permissible since he was not a German citizen.
- Maybe he went back to Switzerland and either worked or joined the Swiss army.
- Maybe he was a troublemaker and found himself at odds with the law and maybe even served prison time. We hope not.

Again, there is a time frame of 21 years after arrival in Bavaria where we simply cannot detail what Heinrich was doing except for living his life as best he could in his new home.

There is another possibility, however. Maybe Heinrich hired out as a farmhand in the Aitersteiner area. This could explain how he and Elisabeth Hohenbrunner ultimately connected.

Otherwise, there are no records that can tell us what was going on in his life.....until about 1838.

Next, Let's Look at Elisabeth Hohenbrunner's Early Years

Elisabeth Hohenbrunner's family was a Catholic farming family. Elisabeth was born in 1813 at her family's farm home in Aitersteiner and baptized the same day. Aitersteiner is located about 16 miles due east of Munich. She was the 10th of 11 children born to her parents Melchior Hohenbrunner and Elisabeth Köch. There is a conflict of the number of children in the family. One record suggests she was the 9th of 10 children. Another record shows she was 10th of 11 children. Most data suggests that there were 11 children and Elisabeth was the 10th.

Three of those brothers and sisters died at a young age before Elisabeth was born.

Elisabeth had 6 brothers and sisters alive when she was born in 1813. Their ages ranged from 13 years to 2 years. Subsequently, a younger sister Maria was born about 3 years later in Aitersteiner. Until Maria came along, Elisabeth had only one sister and 5 brothers.

At the time of Elisabeth's birth, the family lived in a typical German farm long house, also referred to as a house-barn. About one-third to one fourth of the building was their home including one and sometimes two stories, while the rest was a barn, all under one roof.

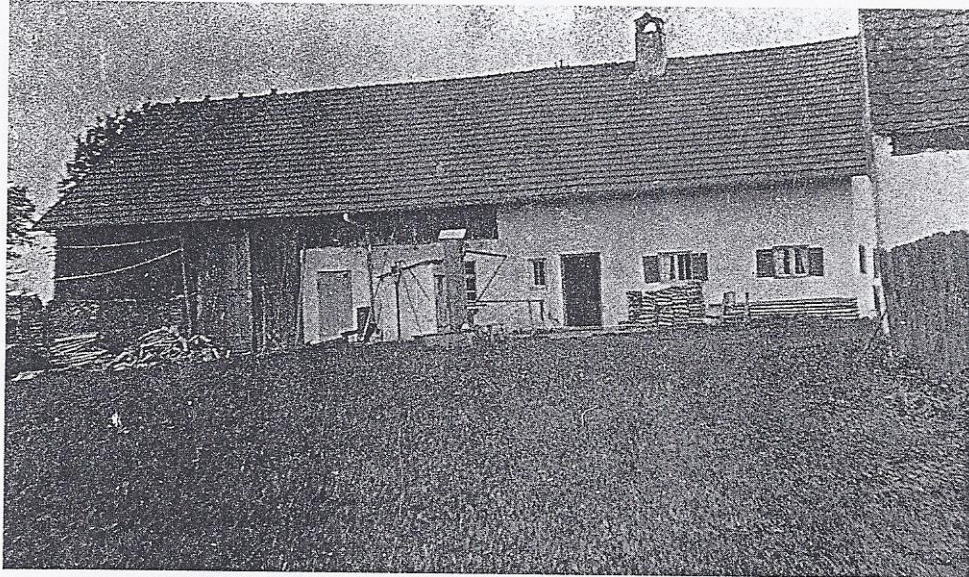
As she grew up, she spent most of her younger days playing with her young brothers and sisters on the farm. By age 5, she had some simple chores to do to help out. As she grew older, she may have attended some schooling. But half of the Bavarian population was illiterate in the late 1700s. However, that trend improved during the 19th century, so it is possible that she attended some schooling in the years from age 5 (1818) to age 15 (1828), or later.



The Hohenbrunner Farmhouse

As I mentioned earlier, the Hohenbrunner farm consisted of a long-house and perhaps one or two other smaller buildings.

The longhouse served a dual purpose. Part of the building housed the family and this part had bedrooms, kitchen, and maybe an eating area. The photo below is believed to be the actual farmhouse of Melchior Hohenbrunner and his family, and it is likely the house where Elisabeth was born and grew up. This picture was taken much later in the farm home's life.

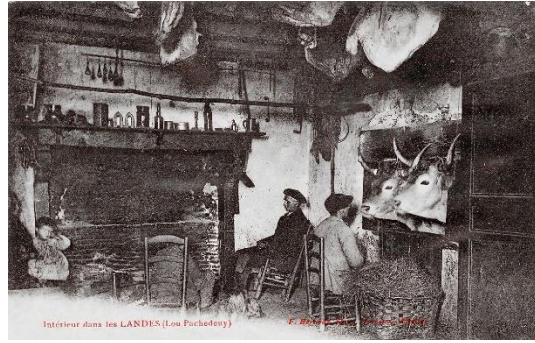


Examination of the photo shows that the residence part in this house is approximately the right hand one-third of the building. While there seems to be no windows defining an upper level, it is likely it was a second story level to the structure. The barn was the left-hand two thirds of the structure. There is a well structure at about the middle of the building as well as lots of firewood to be used for cooking and for winter warmth.

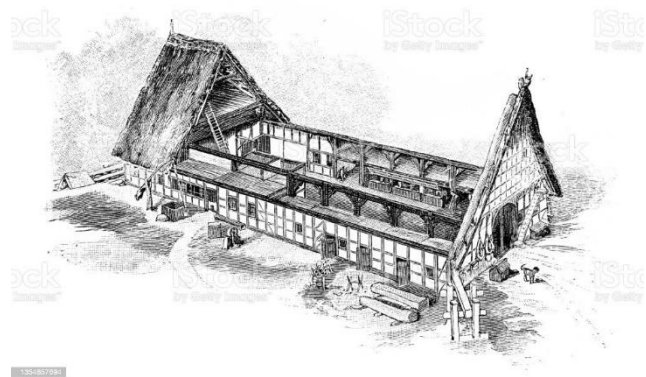
While the above picture is believed to be the actual farmhouse, the following image is possibly what their complete farm looked like from above:



Houses had names in this time. The name of this house was Kaiserhaus. It also had a more recognizable address: Aitersteinerung 1 and later Aitersteinerung 4. Winter temperatures can range from 37F to 25F. This kind of structure provided a way to keep livestock warm in extreme temps if they in fact kept animals inside, and there is some evidence that they did. We can only hope and assume that the wall separating the barn and home was well built!



The following images are views of a typical German farm long-house as it may have looked in the early to mid-1800s.





Yes, But What did they Look Like in the 1800s

I will digress a little here and try to speculate on how Heinrich and Elisabeth and the family dressed and looked in the first half of the 1800s.

This section is based on online writings about traditional “costumes” plus drawings and paintings of these clothes in 19th century Germany.

We know that Elisabeth and Heinrich were adults ages 20 to 38 in the time range of about 1830 to 1848. You can get some clues as to their appearance by looking at the drawings and paintings of people of that era and which are scattered throughout this writing.

The dress in this time was primarily the Drindl (long dress) for women and Lederhosen (leather breeches) for men. These styles originated in the Alpine areas of Bavaria and Austria, were influenced by French styles, and were worn mostly by peasants in the 1700s. The styles evolved in the 1800s as the German upper class began to adopt these styles. Today these traditional clothes are worn for Oktoberfest and other festivities and not as everyday dress.

The women’s clothes were referred to as Drindl. Drindl was comprised of a bodice and floor-length skirt. A blouse was worn under the bodice. Then an apron was added to the front of the skirt and tied around the waste. The women might also have worn long socks or tights depending on the weather and their shoes were similar to what today we might call “flats”. The image at the right is likely what an 1800s Drindl looked like.



This apparel was considered the work clothes of maids and farm women. Colors of materials were the basic colors such as brown, dark green or dark blue. The blouse was typically white. Materials might have been cotton or wool depending on the season. In winter, they wore a jacket or shawl.



There were of course variations of this, especially for outfits worn to church or the village or to other festivals. Sometimes, the outfit was accessorized with jewelry or other items, including flowers. Some were made with finer fabrics.



It is reasonable to expect that Elisabeth and her female family members dressed in these traditional clothes in 1830 to 1848 even as they went about their daily farming chores.

Men's clothes of the time were known as Lederhosen, or "leather breeches". This style is based on the French culotte and evolved to what we might today call a pair of shorts made of leather and held up by suspenders. The evolution timing of Lederhosen roughly followed along with the Drindl.



Again, the Lederhosen was considered the dress of mountain and farming peasants. However, as with the Drindl, for some years the style was also adopted by the upper class.

Lederhosen of course referred to the shorts and suspenders only. The male also wore a shirt, socks, a sturdy shoe and a sock that covered the calf. Again, the dress evolved over the 18 and 19th centuries and were made of plain leather materials. Leather was the material of choice in Germany for many years based on its durability. The clothes were built for hard work and not for show.



Of course, it is reasonable to assume that Heinrich adopted and wore this style of clothes.

In the late 1800s, it was decreed by the government that the Drindl and Lederhosen would be required dress for Oktoberfest and other German festivals. Over the years, there have been many changes. These include adding more accessories and colors. In addition, the Drindl has taken on a shorter profile and blouses today may expose more of the female chest.

Heinrich and Elisabeth's Life Together in Aitersteiner

I will now utilize a little poetic license in order to describe a possible life of Heinrich and Elisabeth while they lived in Germany. Again, this story is a mix of known details plus generic information about life in the early to the mid-1800s in Bavaria.

When Elisabeth was born in 1813, her father Melchior was 42 years of age, and her mother Elisabeth was 38. Her siblings were Joseph (13), Melchior (8), Anna (6), George (3) and Franz (2). Her younger sister Maria came 3 years later when Elisabeth was three.

Elisabeth was cared for by her mother and older sister Anna. When she was older, she was able to do simple chores around the house, and later, she took



on more tasks as expected in a farming household. But she and her sister Anna and her mother and later her new sister



Maria were responsible for the household while her father and brother Joseph and later George and Franz took care of the farming chores.

The farm raised some vegetables for the family use plus some grains and animals for sale. Elisabeth and her sister and mother looked after the family garden.

Elisabeth and her sister had a few playthings such as a doll or other homemade items. But they mostly just played tag and hide and seek like most children of their age.



Life went on this way as the family matured and as Elisabeth and her siblings grew up. As she matured, Elisabeth was expected to do work in the kitchen and in

the garden. She may have also been required to feed and milk cows and other livestock they may have had on their farm, or to do field work.



In addition, often some girls in larger families were hired out to other households as servants. Elisabeth may have done this work for a few years.

Life in this time was not always work. The family had time for play which entailed games and music and singing. Nevertheless, making the farm work for them was of highest priority.



This lifestyle continued for many years after Elisabeth was born.



In 1825, Elisabeth's father died. He was only 54 years old. Elisabeth was 12 years old. Elisabeth's mother (age 50) held onto the farm and hired various hired hands to work it. She was also assisted by other family members and friends who lived nearby. Joseph was 25 and fully able to run the farm.

As Elisabeth matured, it is likely a number of young men in the community developed an interest in her, a young farmer's daughter. And no doubt she also had an interest in the locals.



But one person caught her eye sometime in the 1830s...our Heinrich.

Heinrich had moved from his original German home of Feldkirchen, one or more times, with his family or on his own, until he ended up in or near Aitersteinerling.

It is possible that he hired on with the Hohenbrunner farm as a farm hand. Or else he worked on a nearby farm in the area. Nevertheless, he and our Elisabeth became acquainted and developed a relationship. In 1830, Heinrich was 20 years of age and Elisabeth was 17, a prime time for courtship. Of course, it is not impossible that they met much later in the 1830s, but, as we will see, they were a couple by 1838 when Heinrich was 28 and Elisabeth was 25.



Sometime in the 1830s, Heinrich began to seriously court Elisabeth. Their relationship was serious, and they were interested in getting married. Unfortunately, German laws got in the way, and try as they might, they could not get past the assortment of marriage laws of Bavaria and Germany. Part of the problem was

that Heinrich was neither a German citizen nor a Catholic. In addition, he may not have been able to show that he had the finances to support a marriage.

At the time, village or state administrators had control over marriages, and they rejected any attempts that Heinrich and Elisabeth made to get approval for marriage. This did not deter them, and they remained together until they both died in America years later.

Heinrich and Elisabeth's relationship progressed in the 1830s until sometime in 1838. They conceived a child around September or October of 1838, and baby Anton was born illegitimately on 9 June 1839. In spite of the midwife and doctor's efforts, little Anton died nine days later.

In this time, illegitimate births were common, again based on the strict marriage laws.



Heinrich may have moved into the Hohenbrunner farmhouse sometime before Anton was born. In addition to being the father of Elisabeth's son, he was also a welcome family member who could help with the farm.

After Anton's death, life went on with the Hohenbrunner family with Heinrich working the farm as a family member. Heinrich and Elisabeth continued their lives as if they were married, when in fact the State would not allow it.

Curiously, Elisabeth's younger sister also gave birth to an illegitimate child on 7 Aug 1839 probably while also living at the Hohenbrunner farm. This child lived. Again, illegitimate births were common in this time.

The Hohenbrunner family, along with many other German families, continued to endure wars and economic turmoil of the time. Nevertheless, Heinrich and Elizabeth tried again to start a family. Elisabeth gave birth to another boy, also named Anton, on 28 January 1845. This time, Anton lived only 28 days. Once again, Heinrich and Elizabeth were denied a family in Germany.



After the passing of Heinrich and Elisabeth's second son, they began to talk about the possibilities of emigrating.

Heinrich and Elisabeth Emigrate

The decision to leave one's homeland is never an easy decision. Heinrich and Elisabeth were 35 and 32 years of age respectively in 1845 and had deep roots in Germany including family and the graves of their two children. Nevertheless, they felt they could not continue to live by the rules and restrictions and political conditions that existed in Germany at that time. They began to make plans. Their decision and planning would take 3 years to complete.

They had many questions. How they would get to America, and how much it would cost, were major questions. Where to go in the USA was another one. And they wondered who else in the community had already emigrated or were contemplating emigration. It was common for Europeans to follow the paths of their fellow countrymen to America.

They started asking around about other families who had made the trip from Aitersteinerling or who were contemplating it. They learned that the families Weissenburger and Schmelzl, who lived in Aitersteinerling, recently emigrated. In addition, they found that the families Croisant and Doll and Heinz also emigrated with their destination being Illinois. In fact, about 18 members of the Weissenburger family had made the trip in November of 1847 and were now in Illinois. Heinrich and Elisabeth began to think that Illinois, specifically north central Illinois, would be their destination.

I wasn't until late 1847, around the time the Weissenburgers left, though, that they finally made their decision. It was the law in Bavaria and Germany that citizens who wanted to emigrate were required to file a notice of intent to emigrate in the local newspapers. The purpose of this notice was to inform residents who might be owed money by the emigrant to make their claim. Elizabeth published her notice in March of 1848. No creditors came forward. She was free to go.



Heinrich did not file such a notice, probably because he was not a German citizen.

By this time, they had a plan in place and had accumulated some money to get to a departure port, and then more money to buy tickets to America. They were able to write letters to people in America, so they had successfully communicated with the Weisenburgers and other familiar families. It was typical that the emigrants would communicate with fellow countrymen already in America. There was an intercontinental mail service, but of course it was slow. Heinrich and Elisabeth had no other family members in America...only a few friends. They had determined, however, that Illinois would be their destination. They also knew that the time was right:

By the mid-1800s, most German farmers had land insufficient to make a living. Farms had also become smaller as fathers passed on portions of their farms to their male heirs. In addition, a revolt in 1848 failed to unify the country and lead to improvements. About 6 million Germans emigrated between 1820 and 1914. A sizable number left in 1848 and they became known as the “48ers”.

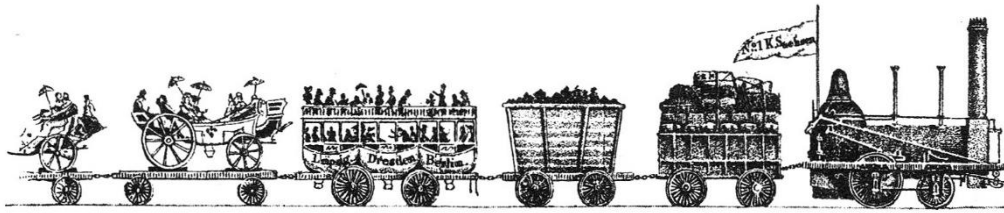
Heinrich and Elisabeth began to accumulate money to be used for the trip. Around the first of May, 1848, they received permission and were ready to leave. Their plan was to go to the port of LaHavre in France. They were able to buy tickets that involved train and boat travel in order to navigate the straight-line trip of over 400 miles from Aiterstein to the port of LaHavre.

Saying goodbye was hard. Elisabeth was leaving her mother and some siblings. It was especially hard to say goodbye to her younger sister Maria. Heinrich had lost track of his family. His father Hans Jacob had died in 1843, five years before Heinrich's departure. His step-mother, Magdalena, had died in 1841, and his older sister Barbara had died in 1836. We don't know about his other two brothers.

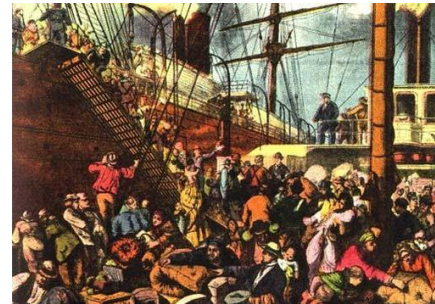
They wanted to travel light so each packed two suitcases and some food for the trip.

The German train system had made great advancements between 1835 and 1850. Maps of the train system from 1849 show that there was a train route that could connect passengers from Munich to the port of LaHavre, France. Heinrich and Elisabeth chose this route instead of an available river route. Elisabeth's brothers took her and Heinrich to Munich in one of their wagons. In Munich, Heinrich and Elisabeth boarded a train, and they were off to a new life.

The trip to LaHavre took about one to two weeks on the train with various connections along the way. The passenger cars were likely open-air and dirty as this sketch suggests.



The trip was arduous, but it was far better than a wagon or stagecoach which people in previous times were subjected to. When they arrived in LaHavre, they found a room, bought tickets, and then waited about a week for their ship to sail. They then traveled the short distance to the port and boarded their three-masted passenger ship. Trans-Atlantic trips could take as much as 2 months depending on storms and the wind, so Heinrich and Elisabeth settled in for the duration.



The ship had three classes of travelers: first class, cabin, and steerage. We would like to think that Heinrich and Elisabeth were able to afford cabin class, but that was more expensive than steerage. We just can't be sure. German records show that Elisabeth was traveling with 250 Florin (aka Gulden), the unit of currency in Germany at the time. This was a relatively small amount compared to other emigrants.

We also do not know if they were alone or if they were traveling with others who lived near them in Aitersteining. Since they were sharing a farmhouse with Johann Landerer and Anna Kirchmeyer in Bureau County, Illinois, in 1850, and since Johann filed his notice of intent to emigrate about the same time as Elisabeth, it is possible they traveled with them. They lived in Baldham, about 6 miles from Aitersteining. Or maybe they simply befriended each other on the ship or after arrival.

I should also mention here that we do not know if Heinrich and Elisabeth travelled together or separately. There is no evidence either way. It is feasible he went to America before she did. We just don't know at this time.

The Trans-Atlantic Journey

As they departed LaHavre, the trip seemed smooth and easy. A few days out, they passed through the German Canal (now called the English Channel) and could see the white cliffs of Dover, England. They continued for two more days until the waters opened into the North Atlantic. The

trip encountered a variety of conditions as it moved through the waters. Some days were warm and smooth with little wind. That meant that the ship made little progress unless it was a steamer ship. Some days were windy and thus travel was fast. But it was the stormy North Atlantic that the passengers dreaded. They encountered more than a few heavy storms enroute. The ship was tossed about by waves taller than the ship itself. Passengers were typically sick as a result, but not everyone was affected in the same way.

Once in a while, passengers could see other ships in the distance traveling back to Europe. Frequently, dolphins could be seen swimming with the ship. Birds would also fly along with the ship, no doubt hoping for something to eat.

Sometime around the 50th day of the journey, a pilot boat from New York came alongside and transferred a pilot to the ship. This signaled to Heinrich and Elisabeth that they were close to their destination. Four days later, they docked at the harbor of New York City after a 2-month journey across the Atlantic. But they could not disembark until doctors and other port officials approved their entry into the United States. Some passengers were rejected and were required to return to Europe for health reasons. But Heinrich and Elisabeth passed the inspection.

The Journey to Bureau Country, Illinois

Heinrich and Elisabeth had arrived at the port of New York. Neither of the immigrant ports of entry, Castle Garden nor Ellis Island, were open yet. That would not happen until 1855 and 1892. They cleared the physical and mental exams performed on their ship in the New York harbor. Within the day, their sailing vessel was allowed to dock, and they found themselves on the streets of New York City.

It is not clear if they had an escort or sponsor to help them. Some immigrants had such help. Nevertheless, they were able to find people on the street selling passage to other parts of the US. But first, they looked for a room for the night plus something to eat. Then they were able to get more information about passage.

There were a variety of routes to take to Chicago, all of which involved a combination of Trains, Waterways, and Overland travel. In the early 1840s, trains were a novelty, but by 1848, train routes had grown substantially. Miles of track tripled between 1840 and 1850. But there were no continuous tracks to Chicago. Here is a possible itinerary:

Heinrich and Elisabeth boarded a train in New York City. Their destination was Portland, NY, on Lake Erie. This train trip was slow and dirty and cold. The passenger cars were not enclosed and heated. The trip was not pleasant but not as bad as their 2-month trip on the ocean liner in steerage.



When they arrived in Portland, NY, they found themselves in need of passage on a steam ship. There were no train tracks going west from Portland. Their ship would depart Portland and travel along the coast of Lake Erie. Their destination was Detroit, Michigan. For the sake of safety and comfort, the route followed along the southern and then west coasts of the lake enroute to Detroit. They bought tickets and were off to their next stop.

Their trip was half over. In Detroit, they boarded another train and travelled to the town of New Buffalo on the southern shores of Lake Michigan. From New Buffalo, their journey involved a stagecoach around the tip of Lake Michigan until they finally arrived in Chicago. It had been many days since they left New York City.

There were other alternative routes that they may have taken. They may have spent time on the Erie Canal from Albany, New York, to Buffalo. In this case, boats, known as packet boats, were pulled along the canal by a team of horses. This full route took typically 10 days.

They may have travelled the last leg to Chicago via the waters of Lake Michigan. But overland stage or wagon was safer and more than likely cheaper than a boat ride.

It is assumed that Heinrich and Elisabeth made this trip without assistance. It is possible that they were traveling with other immigrants. And it is possible that they had an escort or sponsor to assist them. But escort services then were yet another expense that they may have declined.

Heinrich and Elisabeth (and perhaps other fellow travelers) were following the route that was followed by fellow countrymen had followed from Bavaria to Bureau County. But, in Chicago, they were confronted with another challenge. There were no completed train tracks from Chicago to anywhere in Bureau County, their destination. For that matter, Chicago had no rail connectivity to anywhere in 1848.

They had a couple of options. One was to hire a wagon or stagecoach to take them and their possessions to Bureau County.



The other was to utilize the newly open Illinois and Michigan Canal. This canal was opened in April of 1848. Heinrich and Elisabeth



came through the area sometime after May of 1848, so it is likely they travelled on this canal. First, they departed Chicago on a boat in the Chicago River. At Bridgeport, Illinois, they boarded a tow boat on the I and M Canal. This part of the trip took them all the way to the LaSalle-Peru area.

Here, fellow immigrants who had arrived in the area earlier, met them and carried them on the last leg of their trip to near Hollowayville, IL. After 2 or 3 months of travel, they finally set foot on the land that would be their new home!

Heinrich and Elisabeth Begin Farming in Bureau County

As a reminder to the reader, parts of this story are based on actual facts known about Heinrich and Elisabeth's life. However, some parts are based on accounts from other sources. All of that information is merged into this story. Otherwise, our family did not document their life and their struggles as we might have hoped.

As I mentioned above, Heinrich and Elisabeth finally arrived in Bureau County later in 1848 after a long and difficult journey. It is likely that they found a hotel in one of the nearby villages such as Princeton. Or, they may have found other fellow immigrants who had arrived months earlier and perhaps rented or provided a room for them for a short time.

Then Heinrich had to find a place for his family to live. He had just enough cash to rent something...a farm perhaps or a house. This process took some time and the possibilities as to what they did for the rest of 1848, all of 1849, and the first 10 months of 1850 are many.

- Maybe they rented a house in town.
- Maybe they found fellow Germans who had immigrated to Bureau County earlier and signed on as a farm hand. Immigrants tended to help each other get established, build homes and barns, and even harvest crops when needed.
- Maybe they found a farm to rent or even buy, probably on credit.

What we do know is that their first year was difficult. Winter was setting in. If they in fact established a farm, they probably did not do much except to acquire some equipment and try to survive the Northern Illinois winter until spring finally arrived.

The Landerers

This is a good time to mention Johann Landerer and Anna Kirchmayer. When the US Census was taken in October 1850 in Bureau County, our Heinrich and Elisabeth were living together with another couple in one dwelling on a farm in Section 14 of Selby Township. The couple was identified in the census as John and Anna Landera. Heinrich and Elisabeth were listed as Henry and Elisabeth Bainter. These spelling differences are assumed to be recording errors by the census takers. Bainter should be Pünter and Landera should be Landerer.

A German emigrant named Johann Landerer was found on the same list of emigrants from Bavaria as was Elisabeth. He was from the town of Baldham, just ten miles from Aitersteiner. In addition, a notice of intent to emigrate was found for Johann and Anna dated the same as Elisabeth's notice.

Unanswered questions include how did these couples know each other, or did they know each other in the old country? Did they travel together? Did they travel separately and meet up in Illinois by arrangement or by happenstance? If this is true, who came first.

And what happened to Johann and Anna because they are not to be found in 1860.

The 1850s

As the decade of the 1850s began, Heinrich and Elisabeth were hunkered down in their log cabin located on rented farmland just adjacent to the north boundaries of the Church on the Hill. A Northern Illinois winter was in full swing. They had spent most of the year 1849 trying to acquire a farm that they could rent, and some farm equipment. They were able to accumulate supplies to make it through the winter.

It is also likely that they were sharing their home with John and Anna Landerer (or visa versa) as mentioned above. Of course, they were able to make repairs on their equipment and cabin anticipating the growing season which would open up as spring approached.

The 1850 census, taken in October, shows that Heinrich and Elisabeth and Johann and Anna were living together on this farm.



But things were looking up for the four-some. As spring came, they were able to prepare part of their 80 acres and plant some corn and soybeans. And they acquired a few farm animals. They had previously purchased two horses for cultivating the fields. They were also able to prepare and plant a vegetable garden. They were on their way to a new life in America.

In 1852, their first child, Henry, was born. As we saw earlier, this was not Heinrich and Elisabeth's first child. Henry was preceded by two Antons, both who died in infancy in Germany.

In 1855, their second son, Jacob, was born when their first-born Henry was about 3 years old.

Heinrich and Elisabeth continued to grow their farm, cultivating and planting more and more acres as time went on. They were able to add a few additional buildings to their farm, and they were finally able to sell some of their products in the market.

They became active in the Church on the Hill over the years and became productive and integral members of the community in and around Hollowayville.

The decade of the 1850s was hard for Heinrich and Elisabeth, but they were able to get established as residents and productive farmers in Section 14 of Selby Township. Their 80-acre farm was rented, but Heinrich had plans to one day be able to purchase this farm. The farm was situated on

an 80-acre tract that was just to the north of the northern boundary of the land occupied by the Church on the Hill. They had a cabin (log cabin) on a creek on the Northwest corner of the property and had built a barn and other buildings with the help of other local farmers.

In 1856, Heinrich partnered with William Young to buy 40 acres of wooded property in Bureau County. Each would use 20 acres of the purchase for wood including wood to build barns and to keep the fires lit in the Winter. Among other things, that meant that Heinrich and Elisabeth had a good friend in the Young family and they worked together to make their farms work.

Sometime in the 1850s, John and Anna Landerer left the farm. Since they are not identified in the 1860 US census, it is thought that they ultimately went back to Germany.

Also, in 1857, Heinrich was able to become a naturalized American citizen. There is no proof that Elisabeth did the same. At the same time, there is nothing that says she did not.

The 1860s

As the 1860s dawned on northern Illinois, Heinrich and Elisabeth continued to farm their presumably rented 80-acre farm near to the COH. Henry and Jacob were about 8 and 5 years old and were just beginning to be helpful on the farm. That meant that Heinrich had to do all of the hard work to make his farm work. Of course, Elisabeth helped by maintaining the household and the gardens, and the boys, and worked the fields also as needed. However, it was common that farmers helped each other, so it is likely he had a lot of help in those years. Nevertheless, it was continual hard work, except on Sunday when everyone converged on the Church on the Hill for services and friendship and relaxation. Heinrich was a charter member of this Evangelical Lutheran Church. It is not clear if Elisabeth was also. In Germany, she was a member of the Catholic church.



Henry and Jacob became of age for schooling, so they attended some schooling in this decade. There were multiple small multi-grade school houses in Bureau County. They may have attended the school at the same location as the Church on the Hill according to old school boundary maps.

Heinrich and Elisabeth were doing something right because by September 1864, they had saved enough money to purchase the farm they had been renting and working over for over 14 years. They paid the owner, who actually resided in Pennsylvania, \$800 for the 80-acre farm.

Interesting side note: This farm passed through many hands after Heinrich sold it, but it was owned by my cousin Warren Merkel and his family for some years.

Heinrich and Elisabeth had finally achieved what they felt they could not achieve in Germany....a paid-for farm and a good life in the USA. But it didn't last long. Sometime in early 1865, Elisabeth contracted Typhus. This disease was not uncommon on farms in that time. She suffered for a short time, and on the 8th of May 1865, she passed away, at the age of 52 after living only 17 years in the USA. She left behind Heinrich, age 55, and her two sons Henry, age 13, and Jacob, age 10. She was buried in the older part of the COH cemetery, close to the north wall of the current church, although the church building at that time was configured differently than today.

The loss of Elisabeth hit Heinrich and the boys hard. She was an integral part of the family and community. While many widowers, including his father, might stay and ultimately remarry, Heinrich did something different and radical.

Three months after Elisabeth died, in August of 1865, Heinrich sold his farm. He continued to live there, however, for another seven months, either on a rental basis, or perhaps rent free, courtesy of the new owner. He then held a public sale to sell all the family farm possessions. This occurred on a Saturday afternoon, 3 March 1866.



At this point, Heinrich and his sons were homeless and land-less because he had also sold his interest in some wooded property in the county. They found some place to live for a short time, and then in October of 1866, Heinrich obtained a passport for himself and his two sons, presumably for the purpose of leaving America.

Heinrich had sold his property and possessions for around \$3400. Now having no reason to remain in Bureau County, IL, it is possible that he and his sons travelled back to Germany and/or Switzerland for reasons only he would know.

However, sixteen months after obtaining the passport and possibly traveling back to Europe, the family reappeared in Illinois and purchased farmland in Livingston County, IL. This happened in February of 1868.

It is important to note, here, that while the dates mentioned in this section of the essay are accurate, it is pure speculation as to whether or not they went back to Europe. There are no records that specifically show that they traveled to Europe. Only the passport exists. An alternative explanation is that they rented another farm or else hired on as farmhands. However, note, their names do not appear in the 1870 census, as we will see next. I will not invent a story here to justify this data since we simply do not know.

Soon after the 1870 census was completed, Heinrich and his sons began another chapter in their life by living and farming in Livingston County, IL.

The 1870s

Soon after the 1870s opened, a full US Census was completed. Heinrich and the boys are not found in this census. Why they were not counted is a mystery except to say that one explanation is that they were not in the country as mentioned earlier.

Sometime in the late 1870s, Heinrich and his two sons reappeared in Livingston County. The probably happened between the date of the 1870 census and January of 1874 because Henry, the oldest son, married Julianna Wunder at her parent's home in Bureau County in the winter, on 4 January 1874. This is the first family milestone that we can identify following the purchase of the Livingston County farm in 1868, some 6 years earlier.

Since the Wunder family lived in Bureau County, Henry may have lived in Bureau County in this time since he probably courted Julianna before their marriage. But maybe it was a long-distance romance. And it is likely they knew each other when they were younger.

Nevertheless, it is likely that Heinrich and the boys were living on the Livingston farm (that he had purchased in 1868) before Henry married, because it has been established that Henry and Juliana went to Livingston County to live and farm after their marriage. But his dad and brother were likely already there, so it can be presumed that all four people lived on the Livingston farm for a while.

But that arrangement did not last long. Ten months after Henry married, Heinrich sold his farm in Livingston County in October of 1874 and purchased a farm in Section 36 of Berlin Township in Bureau County 12 days later, and the extended family moved back to Bureau County soon after the purchase and established a home and farm.

By 1877, the family was established as farmers in section 36 in 1877. Heinrich and his sons were listed in section 36 in an index of Voters and Taxpayers of Bureau County. Of course, this included Julianna who was married to Henry and lived on this property.

But it is clear now that the Pinter family had finally resettled in Bureau County and intended to stay, which they did to this day.

Sometime after their arrival back in Bureau County, Jacob began courting Justina Croisant and they were married in October of 1878. Jacob and Justina moved onto the farmhouse occupied by Heinrich and Henry and Julianna soon after their marriage. At the time of Jacob's marriage, Heinrich, Henry, Juliana, their first child Justine, and then Jacob and Justina all shared the same farmhouse.



The images at the right are contemporary aerial views of the farm in Section 36. The photo's date is unknown. It is not impossible that the farmhouse shown in the photo is the one the Pinters lived in beginning in 1874. Of course, if this is true, then the images at the right reflect additions and remodeling.



The 1880s and 1890s

As the year 1880 dawned, the Pinter family was still living on the farm in Section 36 of Berlin Township, per the census of June of 1880.

Note. By this time, the family was using the name Pinter totally. Previously, various records have included such spellings as Painter, Binder, and Pinder and Bender once in a while. This was due, in part, to Heinrich's apparent stutter, in part because he spoke only German or broken English, and also in part due to spelling assumptions made by census takers and other data scribes.

In 1880, the family consisted of Heinrich, his son Henry with wife Julianna and their two children, plus Jacob and wife Justina and one child, and one farm hand. The census implies two different households and two different families. Maybe Jacob and Justina lived in a separate building or house...or not. This cannot be proven. It also cannot be proven that the farmhouse shown above is the same house, but it is not impossible, either, with some remodeling.

The family continued to work this farm for two more years. Henry's family expanded to 3 children while Jacobs family had also expanded to 3 children by 1880.

In 1882, two events occurred with the family.

First, Jacob bought an 80-acre piece of land in Westfield Township from his father-in-law Wilhelm Crosisant, on 20 April 1882, and moved there as soon as they had established a place to live on the acreage. The family grew and remained on and worked this farm, and acquired additional acreage, until Jacob's retirement.

Second, on 12 August 1882, Heinrich sold the section 36 farm to his oldest son, Henry. This was a common tradition in German families. Jacob was compensated financially, also. But Henry and his family, and Heinrich, continued to live there.

On a future date which is currently unknown, Henry sold the property in Section 36, and purchased a 40-acre farm in Westfield Township, section 31, just a mile or so from his brother.

Henry and his family then moved to the section 31 farm, with Heinrich living with them.

Both brothers began farming after acquiring their farms and established houses and barns as needed. Over the years, they also continued to add surrounding properties to their holdings as they became more and more successful and as their families grew. They both grew their holding to as much as 300 acres each.

By 1900, Henry and Jacob had become prosperous farmers in Bureau County. Henry's family had grown to eight children, ranging in age from 22 to 4 years. Henry's farm remained in Section 31.

Jacob's family had grown to ten children ranging in age from 21 to 2 years. They would have two more, one of which died in infancy. Jacob's farm remained in Section 30.

Heinrich passed away from old age after 89 years of hard work and many challenges, on 12 January 1900, during a long cold Illinois winter. He was just shy of 90 years old. He had been a widower for 35 years, having never remarried after the loss of Elisabeth in 1865.

The Next 30 Years

Both boys prospered well into the 20th Century. As the families grew, they were able to acquire more farmland and equipment.

During this time, South Dakota was trying to develop as a state, and were advertising property in their state. Both Henry and Jacob heeded this call and invested in farm property in South Dakota in the early 1900s. Overall, both acquired about 240 acres each in South Dakota. How they managed this property is unknown. Maybe it was just an investment. Maybe they hired people to work this land. They did not relocate themselves to South Dakota.

But they were both getting older and slowly, their children married and embarked on farming on their own. It soon became obvious that they needed to consider retirement. In preparation for this, they began to sell or otherwise transfer their farm property to their children. In addition, they both acquired homes in Ladd, Illinois, about 2 or 3 blocks from each other.

Jacob and Justina finally retired before 1920 (exact date is unknown) and lived out the rest of their life relaxing in Ladd. Jacob retired at age about 65 years and died in 1929 at the age of 73, possibly due to complications of diabetes. Justina lived 19 more years before passing in 1948 at age 86.

Henry and Julianna also retired before 1920 (exact date is unknown) and also lived out the rest of their life relaxing in Ladd. Henry retired at about age 68 and died in 1939 at age 86, about three years after Julianna passed in 1936 at age 80.

All four now rest in the Peru Mausoleum, Peru, Illinois. Heinrich and Elisabeth now rest in the Church on the Hill cemetery in full view of an 80-acre corn field.

Please read another essay by me named A Discussion of Heinrich's Family Between 1864 and 1874.

<< The End >>