

the KAISER FAMILY CHRONICLE

1982 edition

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Christoph & Sophia Kaiser

This newsletter hopes to be an annual event, published in March of each year and containing: 1) a short essay concerning some aspect of the Kaiser family history; 2) photos of interest; 3) reprints of old-time news articles about family members; 4) family file notes--births, deaths, marriages, etc. occurring within the family during the preceding year; 5) information concerning the past and upcoming Kaiser family reunions; and 6) progress reports on the compilation of the Kaiser family history. Subscribers please send name, address, newsletter contributions (!) and \$2 annually (to offset costs of paper, printing, postage, etc.) to the editors: Karen and David Williams
1413 Oakwood Ave.
Menomonie, WI 54751

FROM LIPPE TO FREEPORT, ILLINOIS

A Brief Background of the Kaiser Family of Florence Township

Friedrich Christoph Kaiser and Catherina Sophia Hoefer were married in Nov. 1850, in the small farming village of Langenholzhausen in the principality of Lippe, Germany. Christoph, born in 1819, was the eldest in a family of eight children. His father, Johann Friedrich Christoph Kaiser, was engaged in farming at House #32 in the village. Sophia Hoefer, born in 1829, was the fifth child of farmer and shoemaker Friedrich Christian Willer and his wife Sophia Catherina Hoefer, heiress to the farmstead and house at #84.

Christoph and Sophia resided with the Kaiser family at #32 after their marriage. The Langenholzhausen church books record the birth and baptism of their son Friedrich August Christian in Dec., 1851; the baby's grandfathers stood as baptismal sponsors. (It was a custom in Lippe to give a child two or three Christian names, often those of their baptismal sponsors; the child usually was thereafter referred to by the last of his Christian names.)

The 1840's and 1850's were a time of economic, political and religious unrest in Germany. The Industrial Revolution was transforming Europe; in Lippe, the new mechanical inventions undermined the spinning and weaving cottage industry and threatened the livelihoods of many who depended on it as a supplement to their farming income. The Revolution of 1848 caused great social upheavals in Germany, and brought promise of many changes to Lippe. Church reform movements were challenging traditional ways of worship and threatening to split the parishes. Harvest failures occurred in the late 1840's. Poverty and the struggle between traditional and reforming elements in the churches were two ostensible causes of the departure of a large group of Langenholzhausen parish families in 1847. The majority of this group settled in or near Sheboygan, Wisconsin, and a smaller segment settled in or near Freeport, Illinois. Reports of their progress in America, via "letters home", drew other Langenholzhauseners to Freeport, including members of the Kaiser family.

We find no record of Christoph and Sophia Kaiser in Langenholzhausen from Dec. 1851 to Feb. 1856. It may be that the farmstead at #32 could no longer support more than one family. They may have moved to a larger town in search of work; or they may have allied themselves with the religious reform movement and moved to a different parish. Whatever the circumstances, they had no other children baptized in Langenholzhausen. (We believe, however, that they had other

FROM LIPPE TO FREEPORT, ILLINOIS (cont.)

children in those years; the best possibility of a passenger ship listing for their entry to the U.S. is that of a passenger Mr. C. Kaiser, merchant" with wife and four children, arriving in New York in May 1856 ...) In Feb. 1856, as required by law, they filed an 'Intent to Emigrate', which was published in the local newspaper. In March, 1857, we find record of the baptism of their son August (born Dec. 1856) at St. John's Church in Freeport, Illinois, where two of Christoph's younger brothers had already settled in the early 1850's.

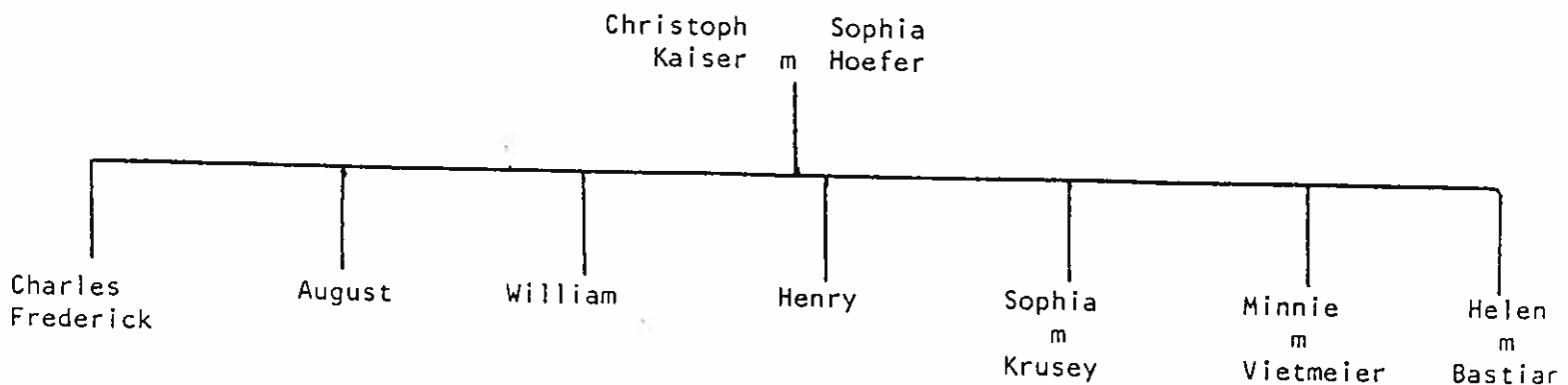
The 1860 census lists both Christoph Kaiser and his brother Fred as teamsters, living in Freeport's Third Ward. Christoph & Sophia's sons William and Henry were born in 1858 and 1859 respectively, and were baptized at St. John's Church in Freeport, as later were daughters Sophia (born 1861), Wilhelmina (b. 1865) and Helen (b. 1867).

About 1864, Christoph purchased farmland south of Freeport in Florence Township, Stephenson County, Illinois. The family prospered on their new farm. The 1870 Agricultural Census credits Christoph Kaiser with 230 A. of land, 12 horses, 10 milch cows, 14 sheep, 17 swine, and 30 "other cattle". They raised wheat, corn, oats, barley, hay and potatoes.

Charles Frederick, the eldest son (born and baptized in Langenholzhausen; note the name change!), married in 1875 and acquired a neighboring farmstead. Sons August, William and Henry married girls from the Schauer family of Freeport and sought their fortunes in north-western Iowa in the 1880's. After five years in Iowa, August returned to take over the Florence homestead farm, where his family remained until the original house burned in 1936.

Daughter Sophia married John Krusey of Freeport in 1881. They raised a family of four boys and one girl and farmed in the Florence area until her death in 1900. Daughter Minnie married Fred Vietmeier and settled on a farm in the Forreston area. The youngest daughter, Helen, married Michael Bastian, son of a neighboring farmer, and they had one daughter before Helen's tragically early death in 1892.

On Wednesday, August 2, 1893, while carrying water to men threshing oats on a hot summer day, Christoph evidently suffered a heart attack. He "fell in a fit ... and was carried to the house, where he soon expired" (Freeport Daily Journal, 8-3-1893). He was 73 years old. Sophia, his wife, remained on the homestead farm until 1898, then moved to Freeport. Four years later, on evening of July 2, 1901, she died at her residence at No. 71 Fourth Ave., after a five-week illness, "the cause of death being paralysis due to a stroke" (FDJ). Christoph and Sophia Kaiser, as well as some of their children, are buried in the Florence Station churchyard, Stephenson County, IL.



YESTERYEAR'S NEWS

(from the Freeport newspaper, April 1936)

SECOND FLORENCE FARM DWELLING IS RAZED BY FLAMES

WALTER A. KAISER RESIDENCE
IS BURNED TO GROUND
THIS MORNING

Florence Station, Ill. April 27--
The second farm dwelling in the vicinity of Florence Station to be destroyed by fire within the past few days was the Walter A. Kaiser 8-room house, located about a mile and a half northwest of Florence Station, which was completely destroyed in a blaze which started about 10 o'clock this morning. The Kaiser farm is located only three-quarters of a mile from the John W. Wall farm where a large 10-room frame dwelling burned to the ground at about the same hour last Friday morning, resulting also in a heavy loss.

In the fire this morning which completely destroyed the Kaiser home practically all the contents was burned as none of the furniture could be removed because of the intense heat from the flames which spread rapidly about the house.

As in the case of the disastrous Wall farm fire last Friday morning the blaze this morning was believed to have been caused by sparks from a chimney falling on dry shingles.

The fire was discovered by Mrs. Kaiser and was believed to have originated near the northwest corner of the house. Flames whipped through the house so rapidly that Mrs. Kaiser was unable to reach the telephone to spread an alarm.

Benjamin Moring, a neighbor saw the flames and rushed to the Kaiser home, but he also was unable to reach the telephone. As the flames neared the telephone, the lines were grounded and the entire party line was out of order. With no means of communication available Mr. Moring drove into Florence Station where he spread an alarm about the community and soon many volunteers rushed to the Kaiser home. The fire, however, had gained such headway that volunteers were driven from the house by intense heat and only a kitchen stove could be saved. The entire contents, including furniture, clothing, fruits, and other food was destroyed.

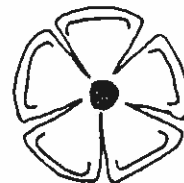
REUNION NOTES

1981. Sharing of old family photos, and a talk describing the German village where it all began, were the highlights of the first annual Kaiser family reunion on August, 22, 1981. About 25 descendants of Christoph and Sophia Kaiser congregated at the Florence Station, IL home of Glennen and Kay Kaiser to share a pot-luck dinner and to compare family history notes, stories and photographs. David Krusey Williams (great-grandson of Sophia Kaiser Krusey) and wife Karen talked about their 1980 trip to Langenholzhausen in the principality of Lippe, Germany, and circulated an album of recent photos. From this village had come not only the Kaisers but a number of Freeport area families. The day was beautifully sunny, the food and visiting were grand, and everyone decided to do it again in 1982!

1982 The 1982 Kaiser Family Reunion is slated for Sunday, August 8, once again at the home of Glennen and Kay Kaiser, in Florence Station, IL.



Daniel Christopher Williams (age 5 months) and Evodia (Van Loh) Wessels enjoying the 1981 Kaiser family reunion



PROGRESS REPORT on the Compilation of the Kaiser Family History ...

Research on the background and descendants of the Kaiser family of Florence Station, Illinois, has been ongoing for many years, slowed at times by illness, the birth of children, and other demands on the researchers' time! Our end goal is the publication of an attractive, historically accurate, well-researched and documented genealogy illustrated by photographs of family sites and members. A quick review of the "detective work" of the past ten years follows.

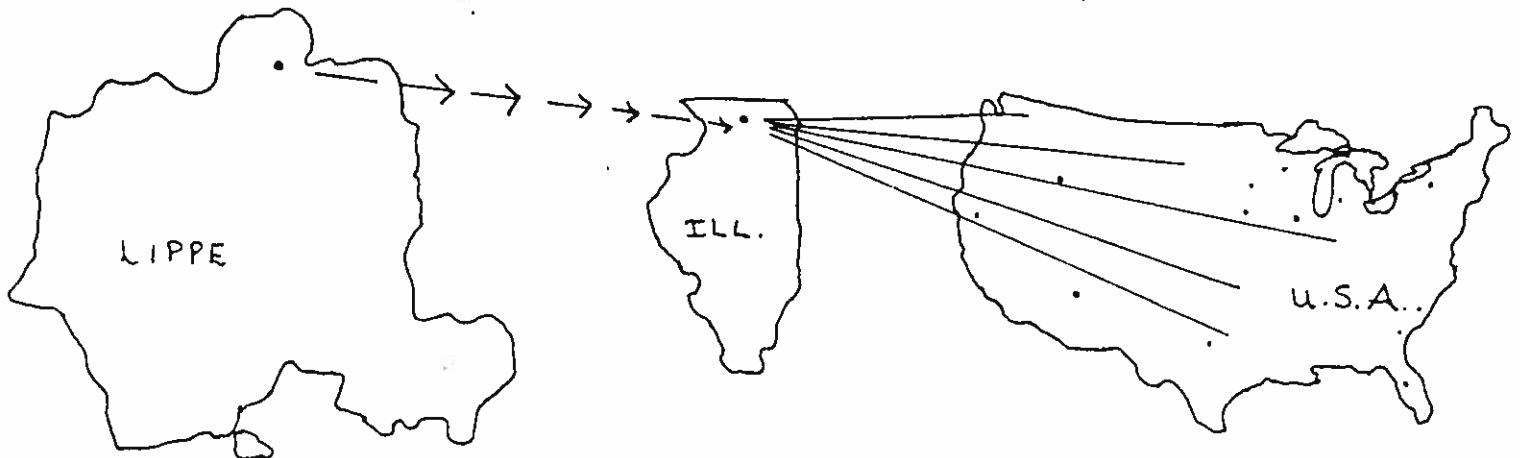
David & Karen Williams began their research in 1971. Having both studied and worked for a time in Germany, they were curious as to where in Germany David's maternal (Krusey) side had originated. Great-grandfather Krusey's family proved to be an enigma (until 1981!) but great-grandmother Sophia Kaiser Krusey proved to be quite traceable. In 1979, the Williams' met Glennen & Kay Kaiser of Florence Station, Illinois, and Bob & Carolyn (Kaiser) Moyer of Freeport, who had also been researching family history and had been members of the Freeport Genealogy Society; and Bernadine (Kaiser) Habeck of Minneapolis, MN, who had been busy gathering records and stories from the Iowa branch of the Kaiser family. Since 1979, they have all been coordinating research efforts and working in their areas of interest, talent and expertise!

GLENNEN & KAY KAISER (5729 S. Clover Road, Freeport, IL 61032) and BOB & CAROLYN MOYER (514 W. American, Freeport, IL 61032) have been collecting genealogical data on descendants of the Kaiser and Schauer families, and researching records in the Freeport, IL area. Kay and Glennen are also the photography specialists. They have a camera and tripod setup which enables them to photograph prized family treasures on anyone's kitchen table! Numerous relatives have shared their photographic heirlooms with them, and Kay and Glennen are building up a fine collection of "ancestor portraits". The Kaiser family history, once published, is sure to be lavishly illustrated!

DAVID & KAREN WILLIAMS (1413 Oakwood Ave., Menomonie, WI 54751) are well-versed in the German language and script, and have been researching the family backgrounds of Christoph and Sophia Hoefer Kaiser. A visit to Germany in 1977 culminated in identification of the home village of Langenholzhausen in the county of Lippe. Since, they have been working with microfilms of church records and have identified ancestors back to 1756. They are also researching the history of the village to attempt to fill out the church records data.

BERNADINE HABECK (4813 Hampshire Ave. N, Minneapolis, MN 55428) is gathering family data, stories, etc. from the Iowa Kaisers: descendants of William and Henry Kaiser, sons of Christoph and Sophia.

Anyone having any knowledge of family matters or items of interest (old photos, letters, heirlooms, diaries, Bible records, family stories or traditions, recipes, news articles about deaths, weddings, etc.) to share with your "family chroniclers", please contact any one of the individuals noted above. All help is treasured and brings us one step closer to publication of an interesting and well-rounded Kaiser family history.



* FAMILY FILE NOTES *

The purpose of this section is to keep track of important events in the lives of Kaiser descendants by recording those which occurred during the year preceding publication of this newsletter. Appropriate items would be births, marriages, deaths, divorces, college graduations, military enlistments or discharges, silver or golden anniversary celebrations, etc. The March 1983 issue of the "Kaiser Family Chronicle" will list 1982 events. Please forward any such "Family File Notes" to the editors! (This first column includes only those events of which the editors were personally aware, and is therefore rather short ...)

BIRTHS

- * Elizabeth Boll (descendant of August Kaiser), b. Spring 1981, in Freeport, IL. Parents: Lawrence & Marsha (Moyer) Boll.
- * Daniel Christopher Berg Williams (desc. of Sophia Kaiser Krusey), b. 6. March 1981, in Ripon, WI. Parents: David and Karen (Berg) Williams.

MARRIAGES

- * Janet Lee Kaiser (desc. of August Kaiser), to: Alan Cunningham; m. 10 January, 1981, in Freeport, IL.

DEATHS

- + Emma Kaiser Hill (daughter of William Kaiser), d. January, 1982, in Sutherland, Iowa.

* REQUESTS *

(for information concerning the family history)

- * Does anyone have or know of a photo of the old Florence Station homestead in which Christoph and Sophia Kaiser raised their family from 1864 on? (This home burned down in 1936--see "Yesteryear's News" column on page 3). If so, please contact Kay Kaiser, who would love to make a copy of it!
- * Many Bibles have sections in which to record names and birth, marriage and death dates. Anyone owning a family Bible which contains records pertaining to the Kaiser or Schauer families is urged to send a clear photocopy of such a section to any of the individuals listed in the "Compilation of the Kaiser Family History" section. A note including what you may know about the history of your Bible plus any information such as who may have written the entries, etc., would also be much appreciated.
- * A photograph of Christoph Kaiser's mother, Catherine (Hahne)Kaiser, would be a real find. She lived with her son "Fred" Kaiser and his family, and she died (age 82) on January 11, 1881, in Lancaster Township, Stephenson County, IL. Anyone having or suspecting they may have such a photo, please contact Kay Kaiser!
- * Contributions to this newsletter are requested, and will be gratefully received! Remembrances of family members (Mom, Dad, Aunt Sophie, Uncle Charlie, Grandpa Kaiser ...) of life on the farm (or in the city!) in the "good old days", etc., will be great for the essay section. "Family File Notes" must come from people in the know. "Yesteryear's News" could be a photocopy of a yellowed news clipping from your scrapbooks. Let's make this newsletter a family affair!



SNAPSHOTS from the

1981



KAISER Family Reunion

