

Destination America
The Wedeking Family History
1886 – 1989

Written by Frank ("F.L.") Wedeking
Des Plaines, Illinois — 1989

A clean typed transcript of the original
handwritten manuscript,
prepared 2026, preserving the author's
structure, marginal dates, and spelling of
proper names.

Cover Letter

TO: Edna & Clarence Fenneman

Lorena & Lesley Menefee

Esther Dieckman

FROM: Frank Wedeking

DATE: Saturday, Apr. 1st, 1989

RE: The enclosed documents “Destination America”

For many years I've been obsessed with the need of putting into written historical perspective some of the things I've been aware of which bound together will graphically illustrate our excellent German/American heritage as it developed and as it resulted from our Grandpa Fritz and Grandma Minna immigrating to Iowa in 1886.

However, I was only personally acquainted with 5 of the original 7 in the immigration party. Young Fritz having died the same week of arrival in the valley, and Grandpa Fritz dying in 1909, 9 years before I was born.

Another disadvantage was living in Clarksville for only about 4 years out of my 70, and of the other 66 years, 63 were spent living in Chicago and its suburbs.

I did, thankfully, have the advantage of Grandma's touch from 1920–1937. Her living with us, after my mother's death, provided some definite first-hand insight to Grandma's remarkable strong character which she'd developed in the Prussian aura of the 1800's, and her new-world life put a polish on her which, I'm afraid, most of us overlooked.

So what I've written is in this package. It's yours to keep for whatever use you may find for it. It's only a beginning because family life isn't static — quite the opposite — and what's happening now should be recorded with detail for subsequent families' enlightenment.

I'd appreciate something in return, if you please. No whatever hurry, in some future letter maybe:

a) your objective critiquing of what I've done — honestly, fairly, good or bad, and

b) any corrections such as dates, names, locations which you may have more accurate knowledge of, and

c) whatever additions (or deletions) you think would be of interest, plus

d) any copies of early Fritz and Minna photos you could make for revision inclusion.

Thanks for all the good memories we “Wedeking cousins” share.

Love for all.

Frank

Destination America!

“We all came from somewhere else” — so wrote Charles Kuralt in the November 1988 Reader's Digest. And this was most certainly true of my grandfather Fritz Wedeking's immigration to Iowa in 1886 from Prussia/Germany.

My apologetics: This has been written so Grandpa Fritz's grandchildren will know of the events in the growth of the Wedeking tree's main trunk. It's not exhaustive, and piece-meal treatment will be evident.

“Who are the Germans? Where'd they come from?”

4500 B.C. Neolithic farmers — Danubian peasants — using stone implements advanced westward into Europe's Rhineland. Followed by a succession of Bronze Age cultures, then by the Celts, and by Germans who'd migrated southward from the Denmark/Copenhagen area.

113 B.C. – 101 B.C. Romans entered the Rhine Valley and found German Cimbri and Teutoni tribes. Germans defeated 5 Roman armies but lost to commander Marius in 101 B.C.

58 B.C. Julius Caesar annihilated them at Mülhausen. A small remnant, including the Suebi chief, escaped across the Rhine. Caesar said they were undisciplined savages who worshipped sun, moon and fire.

38 B.C. Octavian-Augustus's Lt. Agrippa settled the friendly Ubii tribe on the Rhine's west bank. This was the beginning of Köln, the earliest German city.

12 B.C. – 9 A.D. Roman armies began an offensive against west Germany, reaching the Elbe River by 8 B.C. This was held until 9 A.D., when Varus and his legions were destroyed and the German occupation ordered by Caesar Augustus ended.

A.D. 260 – 476 West Germans took the Roman Rhineland. East Germans, pushed by the Huns, moved southeast past the Elbe. The Roman Empire ended in the west in 476 A.D.

A.D. 500 – 900 Medieval Germany. Tribal confederations gave way to peoples' groupings — Saxons, Frisians, Thuringians, Bavarians, Alemans (Swabians) and the Franks.

A.D. 680 – 814 The Franks' Charles the Great ruled Germany — a brief period of unity. St. Boniface, in Thuringia and Hesse, cut down sacred groves, baptized, and founded churches.

A.D. 900 – 1500 Germany, by the 10th century, was divided into 5 duchies — Franconia, Saxony, Bavaria, Swabia and Thuringia. By the 11th century, a centralized monarchy; peace, towns grew, extensive learning and church building.

A.D. 1400 Germany almost anarchy. Princely territories subdivided by inheritance into a mass of tiny states, each with a court borne by the peasantry. Monarchy declined — no king by 1437.

A.D. 1500 Towns and their culture — Germany's greatest medieval accomplishment. The burgher class arose for trade and defense. The Hanseatic League was greatest — Lübeck, Hamburg, Bremen and Cologne.

A.D. 1500 – 1800 Age of princely states — a mosaic of Austria, Bohemia, Saxony, Brandenburg, Bavaria, Hesse, Braunschweig-Lüneburg, and the Palatinate.

A.D. 1517 Reformation and reaction. Martin Luther nailed his 95 theses against indulgences on the Wittenberg church door. Papal influence resisted.

A.D. 1525 The Peasant Revolt, brutally crushed by the nobility.

A.D. 1534 Gutenberg's Bible produced using movable type. Luther's printed word went to all of Germany. Educated people began using standard “Neuhochdeutsch.” Still in use today.

A.D. 1555 Peace of Augsburg ended that phase of the Reformation.

A.D. 1618 – 1648 The Thirty Years' War, set off by the Bohemian revolt against the Catholic Hapsburgs. Caused little territorial change but much appalling misery and hardship.

A.D. 1648 The Peace of Westphalia ended the Thirty Years' War. Princes retained power over a mosaic of some 200 secular states, 63 ecclesiastical states, and the independent

lands of 1,000+ knights. Hatred and distrust, years of struggle, lasted until the great migrations. Protestant Germany, including Prussia, lay in the north and east.

(Early 1700's — Start of Wedeking Genealogies)

A.D. 1648 – 1798 Germany under princes had a period of order at the expense of common people, who had no control in affairs. Princes built magnificently ornate palaces. The Thirty Years' War caused agricultural depression, depletion of population, and servility on Junker estates.

A.D. 1701 The Prussia title arose when the Brandenburg-Hohenzollern monarchy dominated all east and west Germany. Frederick the Great realized a prosperous peasantry was needed for tax income.

A.D. 1786 At his death in 1786, Prussia was a strong state with standing civil administration, controlled taxation, and standing army mattered.

A.D. 1750 – 1870 The “Golden Age” — agricultural revolution. Population grew, coal use increased, rotation of fodder crops, villages enlarged, dual-purpose farmhouses, state-fostered industry, trade mercantilism — Silesian linen, Dresden lace, Meissen porcelain in Saxony, glass in Hanover, iron and coal in various regions.

A.D. 1806 – 1813 Prussia crushed at Jena by Napoleon. The Rhinelands absorbed into France, reducing the number of states. A popular uprising at Leipzig in 1813 defeated the French, who left behind a revolutionary spirit.

A.D. 1818 – 1834 Modern Germany. Prussia's rise to power created a German customs union — the “Zollverein.” Rationalized in 1818, by 1829 embedded in the smaller states; south and central states joined in 1834. Railroads were built, industry grew, and political unity appeared.

(Grandpa Fritz Conscripted into the Prussian Army, 1870's)

A.D. 1864 – 1870 Prussia's rise under Chancellor Bismarck was forwarded by a series of wars. In 1864 Denmark ceded Schleswig-Holstein; Austria ceded Hanover. The Franco-Prussian War of 1870 sealed German unity under Prussia. Napoleon III's defeated France ceded Alsace-Lorraine. Hohenzollern William I, in the Versailles Palace Hall of Mirrors, was proclaimed Emperor of a united and triumphant Germany.

(Grandpa Fritz Takes the Family to America, 1886)

A.D. 1871 – 1914 Between 1871 and 1914 Germany transformed from rural to one of the world's greatest industrial powers. Population grew from 41 million to 67 million. Agriculture lagged, livestock farming grew. Germany in 1879 initiated agricultural protectionism, beneficial to estate owners.

Thumbnail History of German Emigration to America

1660 – 1685 Thirteen German families arrived in Pennsylvania.

1776 Ninety years later, 100,000 German immigrants and descendants were living in the 13 colonies, challenging the English nature of the colonies.

1820 – 1977 More than 4,970,000 Germans came to America. “Der Vaterland” had many problems — rapid population growth, poor harvests in the 1850's, dissatisfaction under Chancellor Bismarck, heavy agricultural imports from America and Russia, exit-emigration facilitated by extended railroads, lowered trans-Atlantic fares, and military conscription...

1895 Whatever the reason, large numbers kept leaving. The exodus slowed after 1895.

1952 Their coming provided America with much talent and little trouble. German-American achievement culminated with Dwight D. Eisenhower elected to the U.S. presidency, and again in 1956.

Iowa Just Prior to the Arrival of Settlers

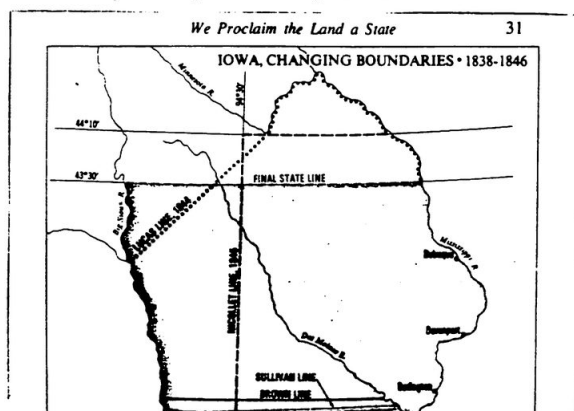
1832 – 1851 “How about the Indians?” — by 1851 Iowa was “unpossessed.” (A period map showed the areas formerly occupied by the Sauk and Fox, 1832–1845; the Potawatomie, 1834–1851; the Sioux, 1830–1851; and the Winnebago, 1832–1857, at Keokuk.)

NOW, A LOOK AT IOWA JUST PRIOR TO ARRIVAL OF SETTLERS

*ST "HOW ABOUT THE INDIANS?" - BY 1851 IOWA WAS "UNPOSSESSED"
NOTE THIS IOWA MAP SHOWING AREAS FORMERLY OCCUPIED BY INDIANS*



*1846 ALSO DURING THIS PERIOD IOWA'S CHANGING BOUNDARIES WERE
FINALLY ESTABLISHED (SEE BELOW). IOWA A STATE - 1846*



Iowa, division of Indian lands, 1832–1851; and Iowa's changing boundaries, 1838–1846.

1838 – 1846 During this period Iowa's changing boundaries were finally established; Iowa became a state in 1846.

1838 – 1856 With the Indians “unpossessed” and 1846 statehood, Iowa's 36,000,000 acres were opened and disposed of through U.S. land offices:

1838 First land offices — Burlington and Dubuque.

1842 — Fairfield and Marion.

1843 District headquarters — State Capitol, Iowa City.

1852 — (also) Chariton, Fort Des Moines, Council Bluffs.

1855 — Ft. Dodge, Sioux City, Decorah.

1856 — opened at Osage.

About 34% of the land was sold for cash, and 40% given away as military bounties (awards) for veterans of major wars and Indian skirmishes.

Table 4.1 — Disposal of Iowa lands (%): Cash sales 33.7; Military bounties 39.7; Agricultural college scrip locations 0.7; Homesteads 2.5; Timber claims 0.1; Miscellaneous 0.1; State grants — Swamp and saline lands 3.4, Educational grants 4.9, Internal and river improvements and public buildings 3.2, Railroad construction grants 11.7. Total 100.0.

	(%)
Cash sales	33.7
Military bounties	39.7
Agricultural college scrip locations	0.7
Homesteads	2.5
Timber claims	0.1
Miscellaneous	0.1
State grants:	
Swamp and saline lands	3.4
Educational grants	4.9
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Railroad construction grants	11.7
	100.0

* * *

- 1846 ONE OF IOWA'S HISTORY MARVELS IS THE SPEED WHICH IT WAS SETTLED:

Table 4.1: Disposal of Iowa lands.

One of Iowa's history marvels is the speed with which it was settled:

1836 census: 10,531 1838: 22,859 1840: 43,116 1844: 75,152 1846 (statehood): 96,088.

1850 – 1854 The rate of immigration into Iowa was quite high. The state increased about 100 people per day. The movement of Iowa-bound covered wagons resembled the Gold Rush. At an overnight Peoria, Illinois stop it was reported that 1,743 wagons had passed through the previous month. Railroads only crossed Illinois, so ferries were necessary at Dubuque, Clinton and Burlington.

German-Born in Iowa, 1850–1910

Year — Total Foreign-Born — German-Born — % of Total

1850 — 20,969 — 7,101 — 33.9

1860 — 106,077 — 35,842 — 33.8

1870 — 204,692 — 66,162 — 32.3

1880 — 261,650 — 88,268 — 33.7

1890 — 324,069 — 127,246 — 39.3 *

1900 — 305,920 — 123,162 — 40.3

1910 — 223,484 — 98,290 — 35.9

** 1886 was the year Fritz Wedeking's family arrived in Iowa.*

Focusing In on Butler County — Clarksville Town and Fremont Township's “Pleasant Valley”

Dec. 1850 Joseph Hicks came up the Shell Rock River, built a log cabin just west of Clarksville in a wooded area called Coon's Grove. John Hecky filed the first land patent in 1850 for land south of town at the river's bend, but didn't settle until 1853. Many more settlers followed.

July 1852 The Clark brothers Thomas, Abner, Jeremiah, and sister Jane camped for the night at where the old cemetery is now located. They were part of a company of 32 traveling by covered wagon from north-central Indiana. Delighted with the area, they decided to stay. In 1853 Abner Clark built a

1852 – 1856 log cabin store at the corner of present-day Main and Green streets. He also was postmaster in 1853. The first school was built in 1855 and sister Jane Clark taught there in 1856.

1853 The town of Clarksville was surveyed. The county courthouse was built 1855–1858 but moved to Butler Center in 1860, and moved again in 1880 to Allison. Clarksville's first municipal election was in 1874.

1871 The Burlington, Cedar Rapids and Northern R.R. (Rock Island) was completed through Clarksville. Service began in 1879 on the Dubuque and Dakota R.R. (Chicago Great Western).

North of Clarksville, about 5 miles, in Fremont Township, was Pleasant Valley (German “Lieblich Tal”).

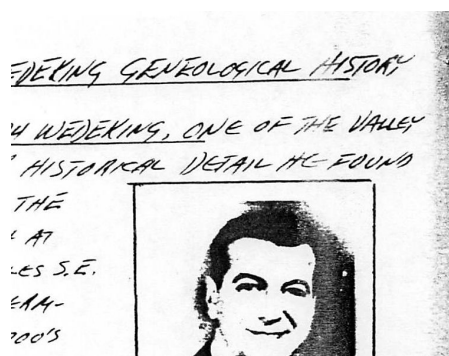
1868 The Fredrich Buchholtz family came from Clayton County (Guttenberg). They were among the first of a large group of German farmers that followed the next 15 years. An 1883 historian called Pleasant Valley the largest foreign settlement in Butler County.

1870 These settlers met for worship in a little country school house. In 1873 the congregation was recorded in Butler County records as “Evangelische Lutherische

Vereinte Gemeinde von Pleasant Valley.” Later that year a parsonage was built. Sunday School classes began in 1884; the first Christmas Eve program was in 1885; the church building was erected in 1889. Other Wedekings were settled in the valley prior to 1886, to be reviewed later on.

Early Wedeking Genealogical History

My thanks to the Rev. Ralph Wedeking, one of the Valley congregation's sons, for historical detail he found when he studied records of the Evangelical Lutheran Church at Husum farm village, 8 miles S.E. of Nienburg, Hanover, Germany. Records prior to the 1700's had been destroyed in a church fire.



Rev. Ralph Wedeking, ordained June 14, 1959.

Generation 1 Johann Gideon Wedeking married Catherine D. Hausman, early 1700's. Parents of —

Generation 2 Johann Dietrich Wedeking (b. 2-25-1743, d. 12-18-1801) m. Catherine Franke (b. 1-15-1737, d. 1-13-1806). Parents of —

Generation 3 Friederich Wedeking (b. 1-13-1762, d. ?) married Catherine Vetter (b.?, d.?). Parents of —

Generation 4 Johann Dietrich Heinrich Wedeking (b. 2-4-1794, d.?) m. Marie Kleinschmidt (b.?, d.?) 9-29-1816 (first marriage), 2nd m. Catherina Maria Krause (b. 5-9-1794, d. 12-10-1861) in 1827.

Germany history ending, America history beginning.

“J.D.H.” Wedeking had at least 2 daughters and 4 sons —

Johann Dietrich Heinrich Wedeking's Children (continued)

Generation 5 Dietrich, father of Fritz, did not come to America. Wilhelm (b. 8-1-30, d. 4-11-91) came to America before 1855. Henry F. (b. 12-15-35, d. 12-29-1945) — 1885. Louis (b. 11-19-40, d. 2-9-1938) — 1858. Mary (b. 11-4-67, d. 10-10-1953) — 1886, with Fritz. Louise (b. 2-5-70, d. 8-18-1947) — same.

Generation 6 Fritz (Grandpa) Wedeking (born in Liensburg, Germany 9-26-1853, d. 11-11-1909) married Sophia Wilhelmine “Mina” Hahne (born in Schessinghausen, Germany 5-2-1856, d. 6-1-1937) 10-5-1877. Parents of:

— Mary (Marie Lena) (b. 10-1-1881, d. 12-1-1965) m. 8-28-1900 Diedrich Dieckmann — parents of Louis, Lorena (Menefee), Leta (Schutte) and Herman.

— Minnie (b. 9-27-1883, d. 4-29-1962) m. 12-29-1904 Herman Kollman — parents of Valerie (b. 1-4-1910, d. 1-8-1910) and Edna (Fenneman).

— Fritz (b. 7-7-1885 in Germany) died 6-10-1886, first week in Pleasant Valley.

— Bertha (b. 11-20-1887, d. 3-6-1978) m. 7-6-1910 August Sinram (b. 7-20-1885, d. 6-8-1954) — parents of Ruth (Huffman).

— Twins: Otto Luis Heinrich (b. 7-23-1893, d. 8-27-1893) and Edward (b. and d. same, d. 9-13-1893).

Generation 7 William Heinrich Luis (b. 11-30-1895, d. 10-30-1969) m. 12-18-1915 Hazel Pearl Springer (b. 10-30-1896, d. 2-6-1920). Parents of William John (b. 8-1-1916, d. 1-13-1984) m. 1937 Louise Campbell (b. 12-18-1917), parents of four daughters: Sandra (Rogers) (b. 10-12-1939), twins (b. 8-11-1944) Jeri (Jewell) and Joni (Thompson), and Judy (Carlson) (b. 8-4-1949).

— *and* —

Generation 8 Franky Frederick Francis Lyle (b. 7-27-1918) m. 6-4-1940 Ruth T. Fordyce (b. 10-24-1917). Parents of:

Generation 9 Paul William (b. 8-14-1941) m. 12-19-1964 Anita Bennett — parents of Robert (b. 1-26-1968) and James (b. 8-14-1970).

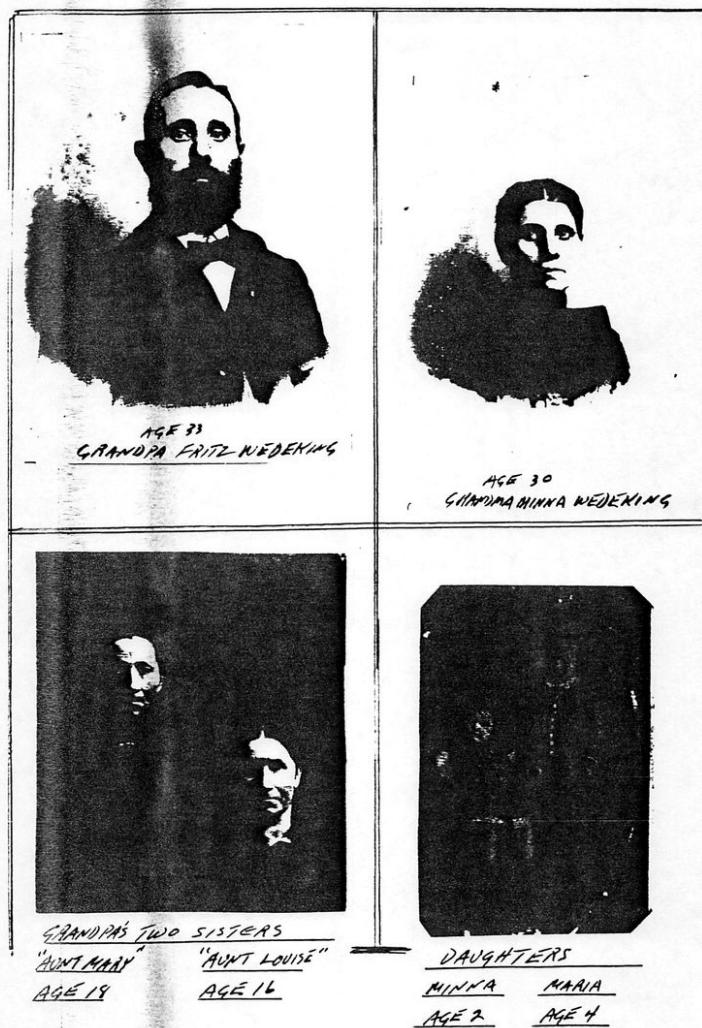
Generation 10 David Frank (b. 11-6-1942) m. 6-15-1968 Susan Larson (b. 9-6-1946) — parents of John (b. 7-2-1970) and Angela Joy (b. 9-14-1972).

Genealogies posted to this date (1989).

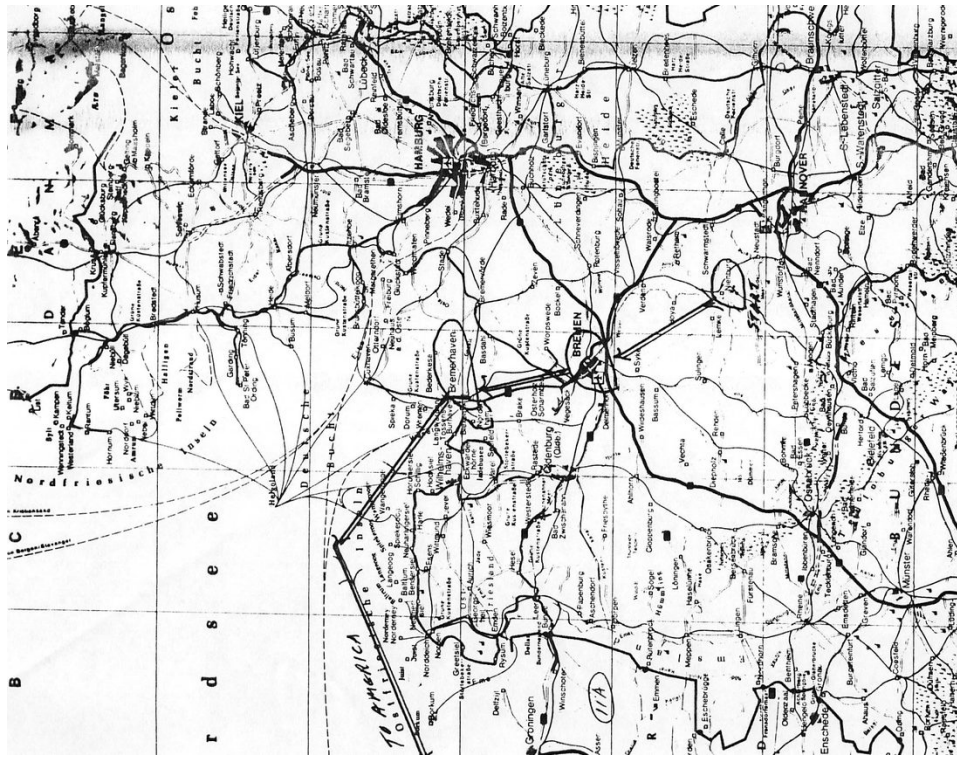
The Journey to America, 1886

Back to May, 1886. Now let's go back in time to early May in the year 1886. The location is in Germany at the farm village of Husum, about 8 miles S.E. of Nienburg, Hanover, in North Saxony. Grandpa Fritz and Grandma Minna have finished closing up their home, and everything they're taking with them to America is contained in 6 pieces of luggage (1 of which is a large steamer trunk). Note 3 maps attached to help trace their route from Husum, through Nienburg, thence to Bremen and to seaport Bremerhaven.

The Emigration Party. But first introductions are in order. Please say “hello” to six of the seven making up the group. Not pictured was young Fritz, not quite a year old, who'd probably wiggled and squirmed too much.



Grandpa Fritz Wedeking, age 33; Grandma Minna Wedeking, age 30; Grandpa's two sisters "Aunt Mary" (19) and "Aunt Louise" (16); and daughters Minna (2) and Maria (4).







Maps tracing the family's route from Husum through Nienburg, Bremen, and Bremerhaven, out to the Atlantic.

All Aboard, early May 1886. Fritz and family left Husum by rail, traveling along the Weser River, first to Nienburg, then continuing on to the Port of Bremen. Here, on Wed. morning May 12th 1886, they boarded the North-German Lloyd steamship “Leipzig.”

The Ship. The Leipzig was powered by a combination of wind-sail and steam. Launched in 1869, it saw transatlantic service with N.G. Lloyd until 1894, then was sold to the Hamburg Line and finally scrapped in 1895.

Leipzig's Crew. “Captain” Carl Thalenhorst, 4 officers, 4 machinists, a doctor, a nurse, a steward and a cook. These 12 collectively were responsible for 4 first-class passengers and 418 “Zwischendecks” (steerage/deck) passengers.

Destination America. From Bremen the Leipzig sailed north on the Weser River to Bremerhaven. Here was said “Lebewohl” (farewell) to “Der Vaterland,” thence onto the North Sea, down the English Channel to the Atlantic Ocean. Their crossing took them to Maryland, entering Chesapeake Bay, northward past Annapolis, finally docking in Baltimore Harbor. It was now Sat. May 29th, 1886, after 17 days on the water. Grandma Wedeking, years later, told me that it had been a very rough, frightfully stormy passage, and that she'd rather die than do it again.

First Sight in America. In my researching I knew when the Leipzig sailed, and Grandma'd told me it had taken “several” weeks. Wanting more information on their official entry, I enlisted help from the Maryland Historical Society. They provided me with a roll of microfilm of the Baltimore Sun's first 6 months of 1886. The Leipzig's arrival wasn't mentioned, but its next departure sailing date was. With this approximate data I then wrote to Washington D.C.'s General Service, National Archives and Records Service. A week later they mailed me a 20" x 48" photostat of the ship's manifest (U.S. Record Group No. 36, M-255, AAR 5-29-1886, roll 41, list no. 44, lines nos. 402–408) reading as follows:

Line No. — Name — Age — Calling — Baggage — Intent

402 — Fritz Wedekind* — 33 — Farmer — 6 — Intends prolonged sojourn

403 — Minna — 30

404 — Maria — 4

405 — Minna — 2 } — in ship space “B”

406 — Fritz — 9 months

407 — Louise — 16

408 — Maria — 18

** Note spelling error, should have been “g,” not “d.” Baltimore, obviously, wasn't New York or Ellis Island.*

Cajüts-Passagiere.		D. „LEIPZIG“	
Fraulein Auguste Gatzemeyer. Herr Louis Goldscheider. Herr Consul William Kohler. Frau Anna Goldberg.		Zwischendecks-Passagiere.	
Hannover. Fürth. Freiburg. Warschau.		Leonhard Wahn m. Fam., Carl Hagen, Preussen. Hess. Ingeborg Rieck, Preussen. Hess. Karen Jansen, Preussen. Hess. Anna Lohm u. F., Amerika. Hess. Elise S. Hansen, Preussen. Hess. Anna Petersen, Preussen. Hess. Anna Schmidt, Preussen. Hess. Peter Petersen, Preussen. Hess. Peter J. Key, Preussen. Hess. Ida Hase, Preussen. Hess. Helene Lange, Preussen. Hess. Emma Lang, Preussen. Hess. Wilhelm T., Preussen. Hess. Carl Hagen, Preussen. Hess. Peter J. Key, Preussen. Hess. Hr. E. Elling, Amerika. Hess. Anna Hebelein u. Kd., Bayern. Hess. Caspar Petersen m. F., Preussen. Hess. Ernst Harlander, Preussen. Hess. Lisa Pries, Preussen. Hess. Emilie Schank, Preussen. Hess. Daniel Durech, Preussen. Hess. Eva E. Schale, Amerika. Hess. John Miller, Preussen. Hess. Heinrich Wieden, Preussen. Hess. Fanny Hartmann, Württemberg. Hess. Catharina Schroder, Preussen. Hess. Fritz Müller m. F., Mecklenburg. Hess. Paul Zimbal, Preussen. Hess. Franz Demuth, Preussen. Hess. Ida Klein, Preussen. Hess. Marianna Kozyska, Preussen. Hess. Christiane Eke, Preussen. Hess. Wilhelm Eke, Preussen. Hess. Theresia Jungk, Bayern. Hess. Rosa Jungk, Bayern. Hess. Pankrat Tapp, Preussen. Hess. Agnes Schön, Preussen. Hess. Carl Jung, Preussen. Hess. Albert Drews, Preussen. Hess. Paulina Jachop, Preussen. Hess. August Martin m. F., Amerika. Hess. Emilie Klatt, Preussen. Hess. Theodor Segler, Preussen. Hess. Knutgund. Woll, Preussen.	
Officiere des Dampfers „Leipzig“		General-Agenten des Norddeutschen Lloyd in BALTIMORE: A. Schumacher & Co., 5 South-Gay-St. in CHICAGO, Ill.: J. Wm. Eschenburg, No. 104 Fifth Ave.	

D. „Leipzig“ — Zwischendecks-Passagiere.	
Joh. Rost, Preussen. Aug. Lehmann m. F., Preussen. Sophie Lautfeld, Preussen. Fritz Wedekind m. F., Preussen. W. With, Dänemark. Richard Erber m. F., Preussen. Friedrich Albrecht, Preussen. Fritz Havel, Preussen. Johanne Cress, Preussen. Johanne Schlemmer, Preussen. Johanne Schlemmer, Preussen. Marie Hübner, Württemberg. Martin von Hagen, Preussen. Johanne Meyer, Preussen. Anna Meyer, Preussen. Bernard Eggers, Preussen. Christine Garthe, Preussen. Emilie Garthe, Preussen.	Friedr. Meyer m. F., Preussen. Julius Hübner, Preussen. Julianne Krantz, Preussen. Eduard Grabowsky u. F., Preussen. Gustav Stahl, Preussen. Wilhel. Hoff, Preussen. Rachet Wolkowicki, Preussen. Franz Krenn, Preussen. Andreas Seldner, Preussen. Wend. Dörfler u. F., Preussen. Carl Meisner, Preussen. Marie Sture, Preussen. Franz Hück u. F., Preussen. Johanne Schuf u. F., Preussen. Franz Kadavy, Preussen. Franz Wondra, Preussen. Wilhel. Schwarzwälder, Bayern.

Norddeutscher Lloyd, Bremen.

Passager-Liste

Dampfers „LEIPZIG“

Capitain C. Thalenhorst.

Von

BREMEN nach BALTIMORE

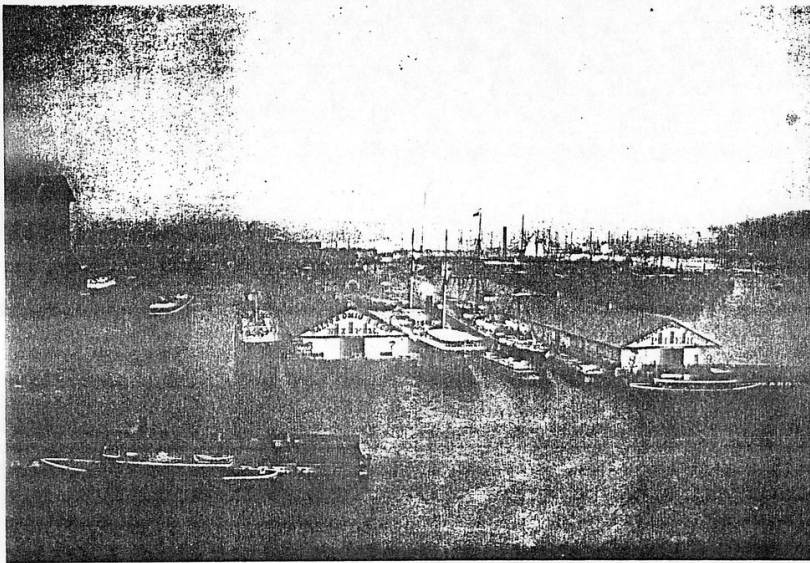
am 12. Mai 1886.

BREMEN.

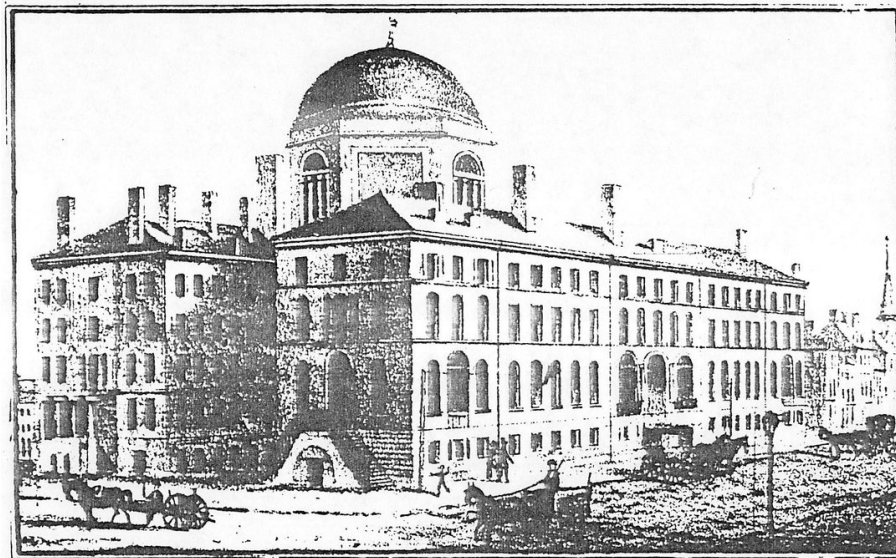
Carl Schönmann's Buchdruckerei.

The Leipzig's passenger list, Bremen to Baltimore, May 12, 1886 — "Fritz Wedekind m. Fam." appears among the Zwischendecks (steerage) passengers.

First Glimpses. I've attached 3 pictures showing what they did see: Picture No. 1, the B.&O. Railroad and ship piers with transatlantic ships docked. Picture No. 2, the Exchange Building where immigrants were processed on shore, erected in 1815 of brick with a figure of Diana on the dome serving as a weathervane to show if wind was favorable for ship traffic; the south wing was the U.S. Customs House; torn down in 1902. Picture No. 3, a special B.&O. immigrant train loading up, carrying immigrants to Chicago (and elsewhere).



The Baltimore & Ohio Railroad piers and Locust Point about 1872. The piers, built in 1867, and the Grain Elevator (left), built in 1872, were part of a big modernizing program to attract new commerce. The Baltimore & Bremen Line and the Allan Line, whose ships are shown, were the first regular transatlantic passenger steamship lines to use Baltimore.



PICTURE 2)

EXCHANGE BUILDINGS.



6 THE WAY WEST

PICTURE 3)

An immigrant train at the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad pier, Locust Point, Maryland, in the 1880s. After the Civil War, special trains carried immigrants from the eastern seaboard to Chicago, St. Louis and other Mid-West cities.

The Baltimore & Ohio Railroad piers, the Exchange Buildings where immigrants were processed, and a special B.&O. immigrant train loading for Chicago.

To Clarksville. Upon arrival at Chicago's B.&O. Grand Central Station, the family transferred to the Illinois Central to Waterloo, Iowa. A final

train change to C.N.W. or R.I. or C.G.W. (exact routing uncertain) took them to Clarksville.

Pleasant Valley: 1886–1898

Clarksville at last — and Family Reunions, 1886. When Grandpa Fritz and family stepped off the train, they were greeted by uncles William and Luis, who'd lived in Clayton County during the Civil War (1860's) and were among the first Germans in Pleasant Valley. Another greeter was Fritz's younger brother Henry F. (“Grota Heinrich” — “Big Henry”) who'd been his sponsor.

Fritz Nick-Named “Tepp Fritz.” Greetings completed, the immigration party now traveled by wagon to Pleasant Valley and to their new home on the “Tepp” farm, located just a mile north of the church. Grandpa Fritz eventually was known as “Tepp Fritz.”

Sorrow. “Pleasant” Valley turned into “Sorrow” the first week after the family's arrival. Reason: young Fritz died on June 10, a Thursday, 1886, and was buried in the Valley cemetery, only 11 months, 3 days old. Cause of death not known.

Other Pleasant Valley Wedekings before June 1886. Other Wedekings were residing in Pleasant Valley prior to 1886, as can be noted in church records — marriages:

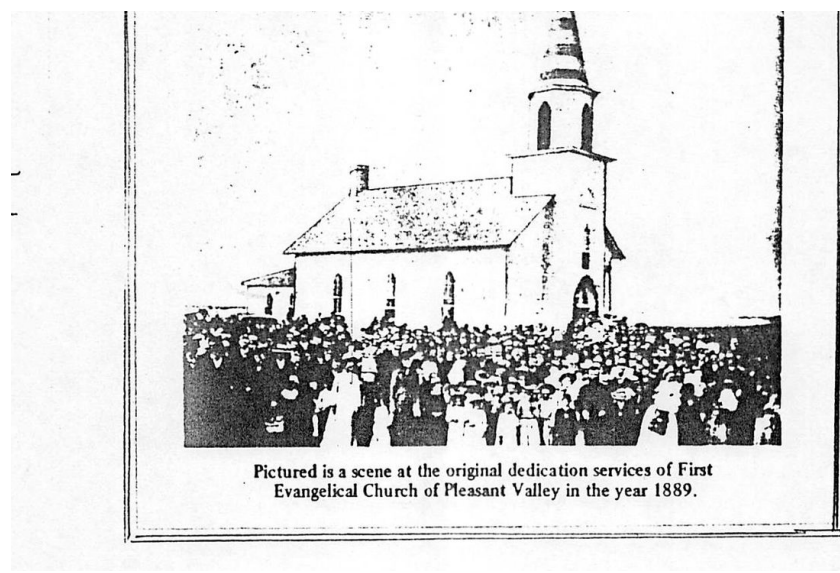
Karoline Wedeking to Heinrich Heine — 1-25-1878

Alvine ” to ” Wefel — 1-30-1880

Louise C. ” to Hermann Frerichs — 1-29-1884

Heinrich W. ” to Ernstine Buchholz — 3-4-1885

Friedrich ” to Auguste Kruger — 2-13-1886



Dedication day, First Evangelical Church of Pleasant Valley, 1889.

Valley Life, 1886–1898. The life of the newcomers wasn't one of isolation such as that of those settling in the Dakotas. There were neighbors near-by and much family support, and pastoral help when needed. We've noted at least 5 Wedeking marriages prior to 1886, and also that 11 Wedeking babies were born and baptized during this same period. Living was quite full and varied. Horse-powered farming kept them very busy. Most of their everyday foodstuffs were raised on their farm. Note also the following events in their lives:

June 10, 1886 Young Fritz died. Burial in P.V. cemetery.

July 8, 1886 First citizenship papers taken out, Butler County Court House.

Nov. 20, 1887 Daughter Bertha L. born. Baptized Sept. 30, 1888.

Nov. 22, 1888 Sister Mary, now 21, married Louis Wedeking (b. 11-9-64, d. 12-22-1949).

Dec. 11, 1890 ” Louise, now 20, married Heinrich Poppe (b. 8-21-53, d. 9-1-1906).

Oct. 7, 1891 Fritz Wedeking became an American citizen — B.C. District Court.

July 23, 1893 Son Otto Luis Heinrich born; also Edward — twins, had health problems.

Aug. 22, 1893 Twins baptized by Pastor A. Kohler (see certificate).

Aug. 27, 1893 Twin Otto died, age 1 month 4 days. Reason unknown.

Sept. 13, 1893 Twin Edward died, age 2 months 10 days. Same.

Nov. 30, 1895 Son William Heinrich Lui born, baptized 1-12-1896 by Pastor C.A. Heldberg (see certificate).

Grandpa Fritz also was active in Pleasant Valley Church. Following, taken from the church record book — membership required one to be a) baptized, b) confirmed, c) and to take the Bible as God's revelation. Every member is required to send his children to religious instruction and to have them confirmed. Every member of voting age (21) is obligated to attend congregational meetings.

[Recorded Activities](#)

Yearly congregational meeting, Jan. 2, 1889. Voted to build a church and that every member haul 2 loads of stone before April 1st. The building committee: Fritz Wedeking (age 35), Fritz Buchholz and Heinrich Buchholz.

Cong. meeting, Feb. 7, 1889. Every member who can't work one day on the church must pay \$1 to the building committee “right away” so they can hire another man in his place. Those who haven't hauled stone by April 1st must pay \$2 a load.

Cong. meeting, April 7, 1889. Agreed to build 3 rows of pews, and the committee is to buy them “cheapest.”



Rev. August Kampmeier, pastor 1883–1891.

Special cong. meeting, June 9, 1889. Church dedication to be June 30, 1889. Church to be insured for \$1,500. Windows to be papered.

Cong. meeting, July 2, 1889. Every church member is obligated to keep order in and outside the church. Pastor Kampmeier to clean church for \$6 a year. Fritz Wedeking builds the fires for \$4 a year.

Cong. meeting, July 16, 1890. Agreed to have a free-will offering to buy a bell.

Cong. meeting, Oct. 5, 1890. Every member to pay 25¢ at next meeting for coal.

Cong. meeting, Mar. 3, 1892. Fritz Wedeking will build fence for congregation to tie horses to.

Yearly cong. meeting, Jan. 2, 1892, item no. 14. Business: Fritz Wedeking will be church janitor and clean church for \$12 a year.

National Politics

There was a store and a creamery south of the church, which, without doubt, provided an arena for local politicians to “cracker-barrel” the merits of presidential issues:

1884 — Grover Cleveland, Dem., N.Y., defeated James G. Blaine, Rep., Maine.

1888 — Benjamin Harrison, Rep., Ind., defeated Grover Cleveland, Dem., N.Y.

1892 — Grover Cleveland, Dem., N.Y., defeated Benjamin Harrison, Rep., Ind.

1896 — William McKinley, Rep., Ohio, defeated William J. Bryan, Dem./Pop., Nebr.

Fritz Leaves the Valley, March 28, 1898. Then came the “sale” (see attachment) on Monday, March 28th, '98, at public auction, after 11½ years of farming: 5 horses, 5 cows, 2 heifers, 6 calves, 40 hogs, 100 chickens, etc., etc. Terms: all sums under \$5 cash; over \$5, 1 year, 8% approved notes.

SALE!

I will offer at public auction at my farm 6 1-2 miles northeast of Clarksville and 4 miles west of Plainfield, on

MONDAY, MAR. 28, '98

COMMENCING 10 O'CLOCK, SHARP.

5 Horses; 5 Cows; 2 Heifers; 6 Calves; 40 Hogs, including 10 sows with pig; 100 Chickens; 1 Deering binder; 1 Riding stirring plow; 1 Walking stirring plow; 1 Cultivator; 1 Drag; 1 Pulverizer; 1 Broadcast seeder; 1 Fanning mill; 1 Hayrake; 1 Mower; 1 Corn planter, with check rower; 1 Pair bob sleighs; 1 Lumber wagon; 1 Feed grinder; Several tons of tame hay in barn, Several cords of stove wood, 3 Milk cans; 50 Fence posts, Seed corn.

TERMS:--All sums under \$5, cash; all sums of \$5 or over one year's time at 8 per cent. on approved notes. All property must be settled for before being removed.

J. J. EICHAR, Auctioneer
BECK WAMSLEY, Clerk

FRTZ WEDEKING, SR.

The 1898 farm sale bill.

When it was all over, Fritz and family moved to Clarksville, almost coinciding with the new century.

1898–1909: Fritz Wedeking's Clarksville Years

1900's, The New Century. For the following I'm deeply indebted to Rudolf Preineke and his “Years Ago” commemorative edition (1978), in which he wrote: “Clarksville's symbolic change to the new century was the gradual replacement of plank sidewalks by cement over several years, plus 7 events of the first 3 years of the 1900's:

1) Rural Free Delivery, 1900.

2) The building of Immanuel Church, 1902.

3) Filing the plat of King's Addition — 8 north blocks.

4) The electric light plant, Jan. 14, 1903. Service provided every evening 5 PM to 11 PM, and winter mornings 5:30 AM to 8 AM.

5) The Auditorium building — organized 5-22-1902, first year end 1-22-1903.

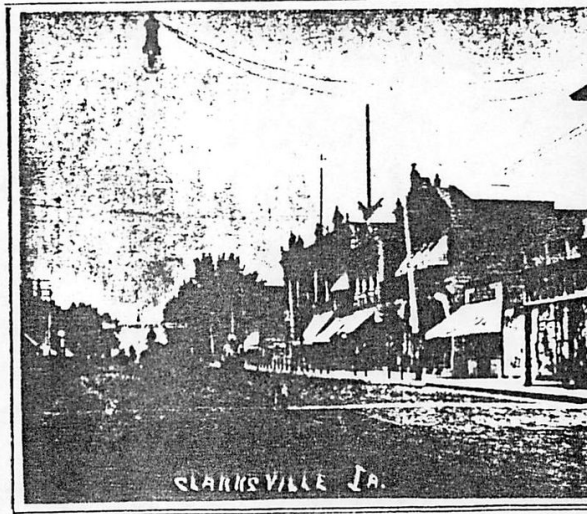
6) A new school to replace the old courthouse, completed 9-28-1903.

7) The opening of Chicago Great Western's gravel pit — 1903.

1898–1909. Fritz Wedeking's move to Clarksville — details almost unknown. He did have a building on the east side of Main Street, and he remodeled the store's front façade, and from it he operated the “City Meat Market.” Behind his store was an ice-house to provide refrigeration. His slaughter house was south of town on the mill race bank. The building's second floor provided his family with living quarters.

PROVIDED HIS FAMILY WITH LIVING QUARTERS

CLARKSVILLE IOWA
MAIN STREET EAST-
SIDE LOOKING NORTH
SUMMER OF 1908
MEAT MARKET INDICATED BY ARROW



* * * * *

BY 1900 SOME GERMAN'S HAD RETIRED TO CLARKSVILLE

Clarksville, Iowa — Main Street, summer 1908. Meat Market indicated by arrow.

1902, The Immanuel Church. By 1900 some Germans had retired to Clarksville, and there were at least 6 German businessmen in town. In January 1900, Valley pastor Heldberg held German services in the Presbyterian church Sunday afternoons. In July, Rev. Ewald Hart, Heldberg's successor, continued these services. Later they moved to G.A.R. Hall; growing larger, they changed to Odd Fellows Hall. On Oct. 15, 1901 the Immanuel Evangelical congregation was organized. Their first officers were:

Fritz Wedeking, Sr. (age 48) — who ran the meat market

Diedrich Dieckmann — the shoe man

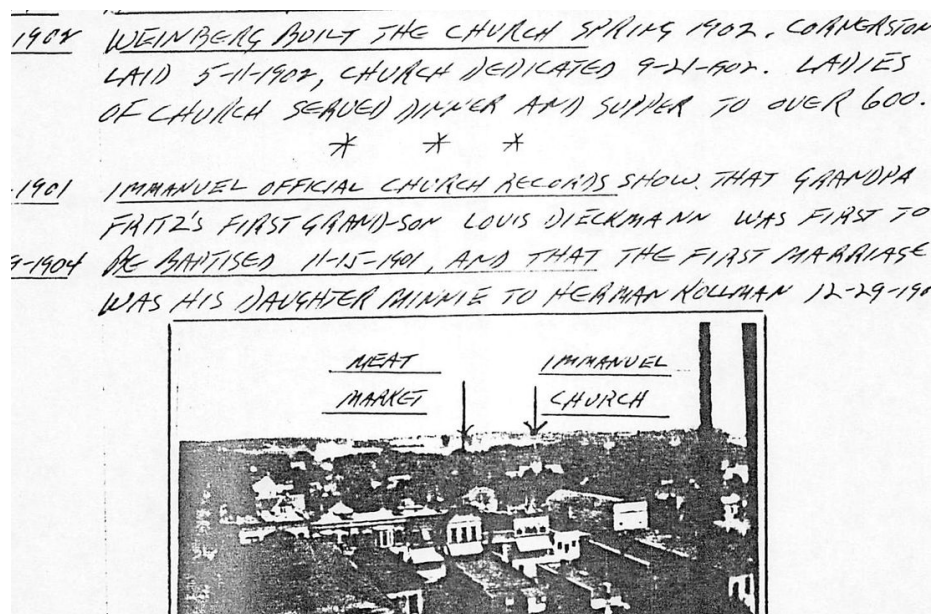
Carl Sinram — a farmer west of town

Carl Scharff — with Alfred Paice

Herman Schmadeke — lumber and grain dealer

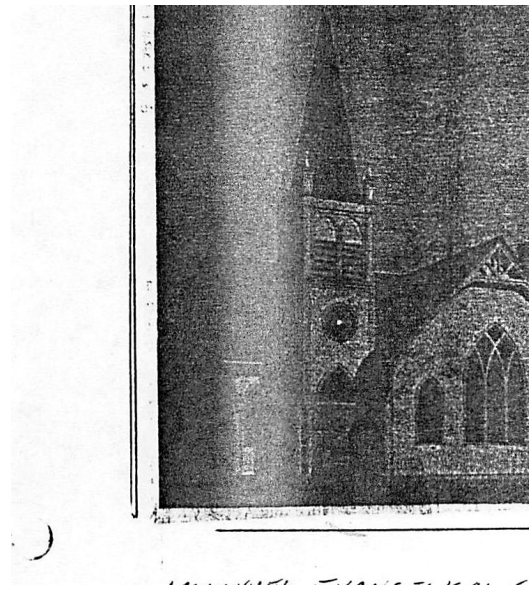
Nov. 1901 – Sept. 1908. The congregation bought church property. Henry Weinberg built the church spring 1902; cornerstone laid 5-11-1902; church dedicated 9-21-1902. Ladies of the church served dinner and supper to over 600.

11-15-1901 / 12-29-1904. Immanuel official church records show that Grandpa Fritz's first grandson, Louis Dieckmann, was first to be baptized (11-15-1901), and that the first marriage was his daughter Minnie to Herman Kollman (12-29-1904).



Clarksville from the water tower, looking east — Meat Market and Immanuel Church.

1898 & 1902. Billy age 3, 1898, when family moved to Clarksville. Billy age 7, 1902. The year 1902 also saw the dedication of the church (9-21-1902), and on 10-5-1902 Grandpa Fritz and Grandma Minna observed their 25th wedding anniversary. They had been married 10-5-1877 in Husum, Germany.



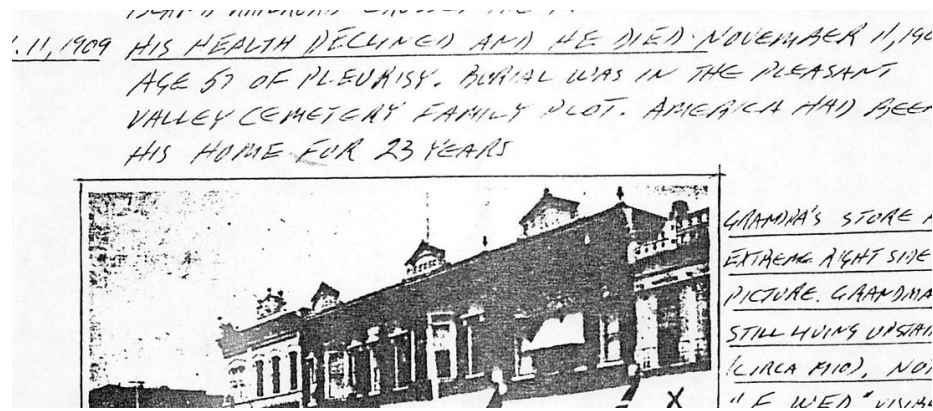
Immanuel Evangelical Church, dedicated 9-21-1902.



Immanuel Church confirmation photo — William Henry Lui Wedeking and Pastor Albert Muecke.

March 1904 / March 1905. Fritz operated the City Meat Market until he retired in March 1905, age 54. He leased the store to Bert Green but continued to live upstairs. For the next several years Grandpa Fritz was one of the interlocking-railroad switch operators west of town, where the Rock Island Railroad crossed the Great Western's tracks.

Nov. 11, 1909. His health declined and he died November 11, 1909, age 57, of pleurisy. Burial was in the Pleasant Valley Cemetery family plot. America had been his home for 23 years.



The Wedeking store building, Clarksville (circa 1910).

1909–1920: Billy Wedeking and Hazel Springer

1909–1915. After Grandpa Fritz died, my father, age 13, completed his schooling — 9th grade — and went to work for Ed Mahigan, publisher of the Clarksville Star. He still lived at home. Fritz's daughter Bertha, now age 22, married August Sinram July 6, 1910 and moved away. Billy worked at the Star for 7 years as the “devil,” until end of 1915. It was during this time he met a Dumont lass who was employed at Clarksville's Tremont Hotel. She was an attractive, tall, brown-eyed 19-year-old miss whose first name matched her eyes — Hazel Pearl Springer. One thing led to another, and next thing you know Pastor Countermine of the U.B. Church united them in marriage Sat. eve., 7 P.M., Dec. 18, 1915.

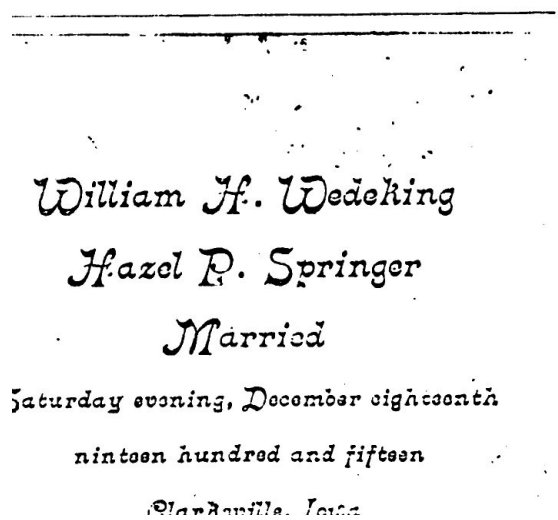
*EYES -- HAZEL PEARL S.
ANOTHER AND NEXT THING
2-18-1915 OF THE U. B. CHURCH
SAT. EVE. 7 P.M. DEC*

“DEVIL” A BENEDICT
Another of The Star's Employees
at Hymen's Altar.

The STAR “devil” has become a benedict. Not exactly the office devil now, but time was not long since when he performed in that functionary capacity. “Billy” is now a full fledged family man and just as old as he looks, which by the way is twenty-one by the calendar. On Saturday evening at 7:00 o'clock, December 18, 1915, in the United Brethern church in this place Mr. William Wedeking and Miss Hazel Springer of Dumont were united in marriage, Rev. J. L. Countermine officiating. Mr. Wedeking has been in the employ of the STAR almost continuously for the past seven years and has been a faithful employe. He was born and reared in Clarksville and has a universal acquaintance here. He has many warm friends who are offering him the best of congratulations. The bride is a stranger to most of the Clarksville people but is no doubt a

Clarksville Star clipping on Billy's wedding.

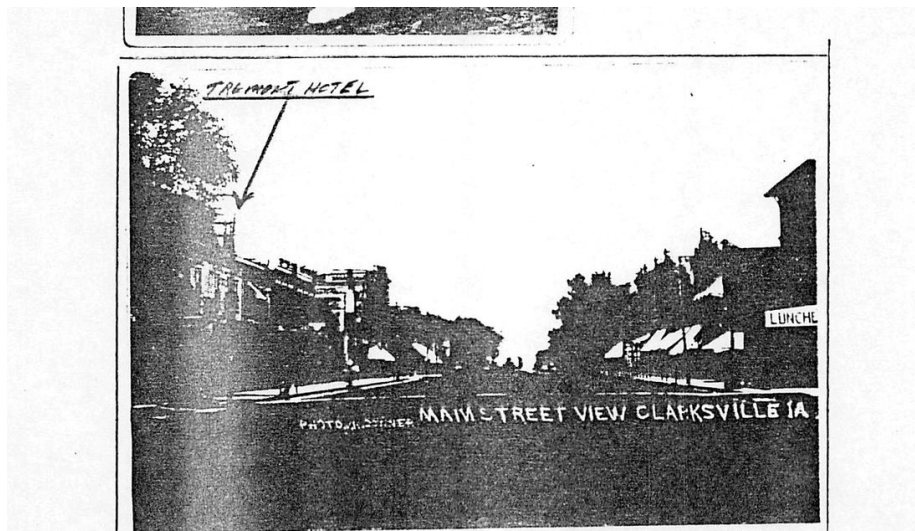
WINGER. ONE THING LED TO
9 THE KNOW PASTOR COUNTERMINE
THEIR IN MARRIAGE
18, 1915



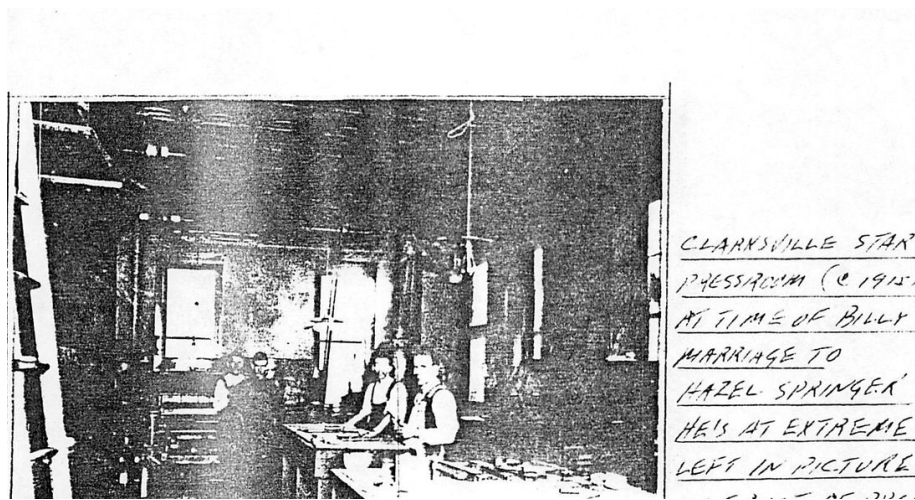
Wedding announcement, Dec. 18, 1915.



Sisters Gladys and Hazel Springer, c. 1915.



Main Street, Clarksville, looking north; the Tremont Hotel is at left.

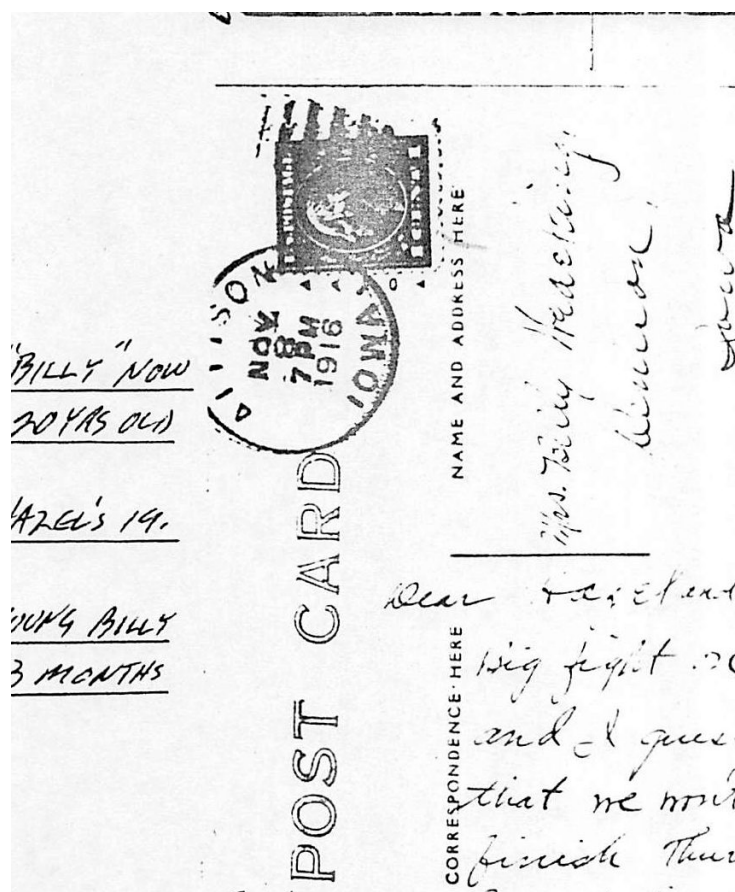
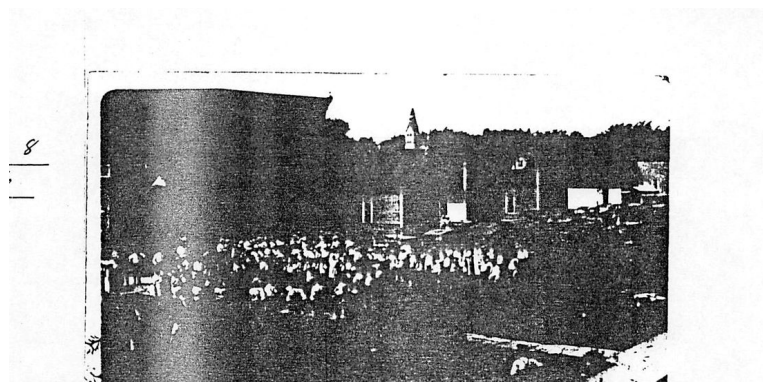


The Clarksville Star pressroom, c. 1915. Billy is at extreme left, in front of the press.

1916–1917. Billy and Hazel Wedeking did “take up housekeeping,” as the Star's item said. Mother Springer's health evidently improved, so the newlyweds moved to Denison, Iowa (on Highway 30) in Crawford County, where he was employed by the newspaper.

Aug. 1, 1916. It was in Denison that my brother William John Wedeking was born, Tuesday, August 1st, 1916.

Postcard, Nov. 8, 1916. On the following page are photostats of both sides of a postcard sent my mother by “Billy” Nov. 8, 1916. He'd gone to the Butler County seat in Allison to see about signing up in the U.S. Army. Message “big fight on” and “we won't finish Thursday” had to do with the fighting in Europe's World War I. It didn't end until 1918. Billy wasn't enlisted, so he wanted to return home.



“Clarksville Boosters at Allison” postcard, and the card Billy mailed home, Nov. 8, 1916.



William John Wedeking, first photo, taken Sept. 1916.

Fall 1917. Hazel takes young Billy to visit her folks in Dumont. At the same time her younger sister Gladys (Mrs. Earl Howard) has her son Earl Jr. there for a visit.

ALL 1911 HAZEL TAKES
AT SAME TIME
EARL HOWARD
FOR A VISIT



TO VISIT HER FOLKS IN ILLINOIS
UNDER SISTER GLADYS (MRS.
HER SON, EARL JR., THERE



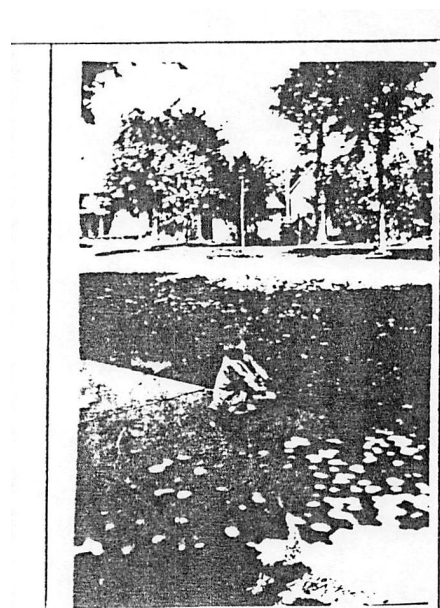
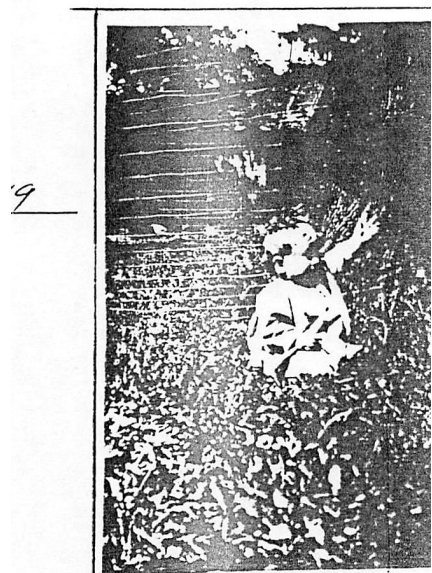
Grandpa John and Grandma Florence Springer, and Grandpa John with Earl Jr. and Billy, fall 1917.

1917–1918, Back in Clarksville. From Denison they moved back to Clarksville to this home on east Green Street. Next-door neighbors (east) were the Swalves: Joe, Hattie, daughters Marie and Belle.

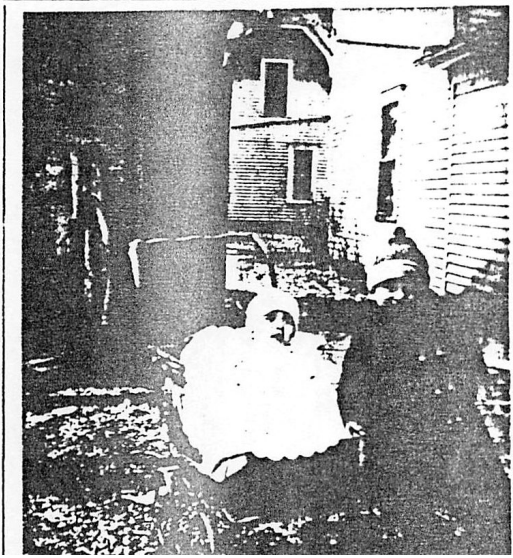
July 27, 1918. It was here I was born. My birth certificate shows my name to be Francis Lyle. (My mother called me “Frankie.” More on this later.)

County <u>Butler</u>		Township <u>1</u>	
City or Village <u>Clarksville</u>		No. <u>1</u> Street <u>1</u>	
(If birth occurred in a hospital or institution, give its NAME instead of street number)			
1a. RESIDENCE OF MOTHER: STATE <u>La.</u>		(If not same as place of birth)	
County <u>Butler</u>		Township <u>1</u>	
City or Village <u>Clarksville</u>		No. <u>1</u> Street <u>1</u>	
2. Full name of child <u>FRANCIS LYLE WEDEKING</u>		(If child is not yet named, make supplemental report, as directed)	
1. Sex <u>Male</u>	If plural births <u>1</u>	3. Number, in order of birth <u>2</u>	4. Premature <u>1</u> Full term <u>1</u>
5. Full name of FATHER <u>William Henry Wedeking</u>		6. Full name of MOTHER <u>Hazel Pearl Springer</u>	
11. Color or race <u>White</u>		12. Age at last birthday <u>23</u> (Yrs.)	
13. Birthplace (city or place) <u>Clarksville, La.</u>		14. Birthplace (city or place) <u>Belmond, La.</u>	
(State or country) <u>La.</u>		(State or country) <u>La.</u>	
15. Trade, profession, or particular kind of work done, as spinner, sawyer, bookkeeper, etc. <u>Printer</u>		16. Trade, profession, or particular kind of work done, as housekeeper, typist, nurse, clerk, etc. <u>Housewife</u>	
17. Industry or business in which work was done, as silk mill, sawmill, bank, etc. <u>Printer</u>		18. Industry or business in which work was done, as own home, lawyer's office, silk mill, etc. <u>Housewife</u>	
19. Date (month and year) last engaged in this work <u>Aug. 2, 1918</u>		20. Date (month and year) last engaged in this work <u>Aug. 2, 1918</u>	
21. Total time (years) spent in this work <u>19</u>		22. Total time (years) spent in this work <u>19</u>	
23. Number of children of this mother (At time of this birth and including this child) <u>2</u> (a) Born alive and now living <u>2</u> (b) Born alive but now dead <u>0</u> (c) Stillborn <u>0</u>			
24. If stillborn, <u>3</u> months period of gestation <u>3</u> months			
25. Cause of stillbirth <u>Before labor</u> <u>During labor</u>			
26. Character of delivery spontaneous <u>operative</u> If operative, give type of operation performed <u>Caesarean</u>			
27. Was child asphyxiated? <u>slightly</u> <u>Moderately</u> <u>severely</u> (Cross out words not applicable)			
28. At what period of pregnancy did patient first consult you? <u>4th M</u>			
29. I hereby certify that I attended the birth of this child, who was <u>alive</u> at <u>4 P.M.</u> on the date above stated. (Born alive or stillborn) <u>alive</u>			
I further certify that this child's eyes (Were or were not) <u>alive</u> treated as prescribed by law.			
Signature <u>C.C. Smith, M.D.</u> Physician or Midwife <u>Physician</u>			
Address <u>Clarksville, La.</u>			
Given name added from a supplemental report. (Month, day, year) <u>Aug. 2, 1918</u> <u>Geo. R. Dennis</u> Registrar			

Francis Lyle Wedeking's birth certificate.



"F.L." outside the Clarksville home, c. 1919.



Baby Frankie and brother Billy, Clarksville back yard, c. 1919.

Other Family Recollections

During the course of writing this, I'd asked other family members for their memories. Cousin Lorena (Dieckmann) Menefee's response is below. Grandma W. never did get a handle on conversational English.

March 20th, 1988

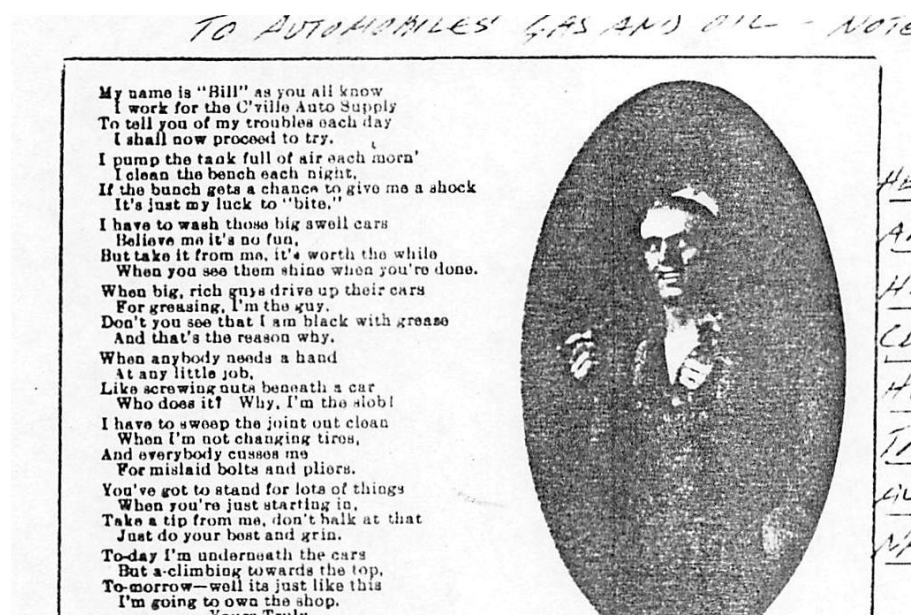
Dear Frank & Ruth:

Such a surprise to get your call — 'twas good talking to you. Yes, we both have many questions — too bad we didn't ask them to be answered before the older ones were gone.

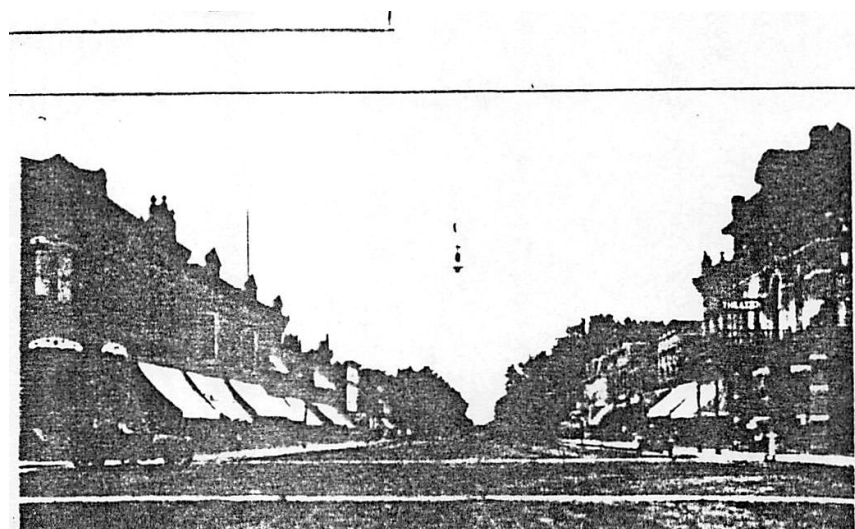
Don't recall too much re: your mom — she was tall and I know worked at the hotel on the corner north of the school house block. It was destroyed by fire, same as the movie house on the north end of that block. Do recall walking in on her and grandma W. one day when they were deciding what to have as a vegetable for dinner — and neither one could understand the other because there was such a difference in the English and German pronouncement of “peas” — in German it was “afcase” or whatever spelling; they were both right. Grandma W. however, done real well being understood and I always marveled at how she read both the Courier and those German papers your dad would get her from the library.

1918 early – 1919, The Auto Mechanic. My dad's early profession was that of printer. During the first 20 years of the 1900's the automobile gradually changed people's activities, and owning a car marked a turning point in their lives. With the increase in cars came a new profession —

the auto mechanic. It was during this post-World-War-I period that Billy turned from printer's ink to automobiles' gas and oil.



Billy's poem about his new trade, with his photo at the Clarksville Auto Supply.



Main Street, Clarksville, looking south.

1919–1920, Moved to Berkley, Iowa. Working in the Clarksville garage, Bill got to know automotive supply salesmen. He became

friends, in particular, with Fred McVeigh, who'd married a Clarksville girl, Luva Shafford. While making his calls Fred noted a garage in Berkley, Iowa (Boone County, 45 mi. NW of Des Moines) needing a good mechanic. He told owner Oscar Johnson about Bill, and he was hired. So the next move was to Berkley — population 100.

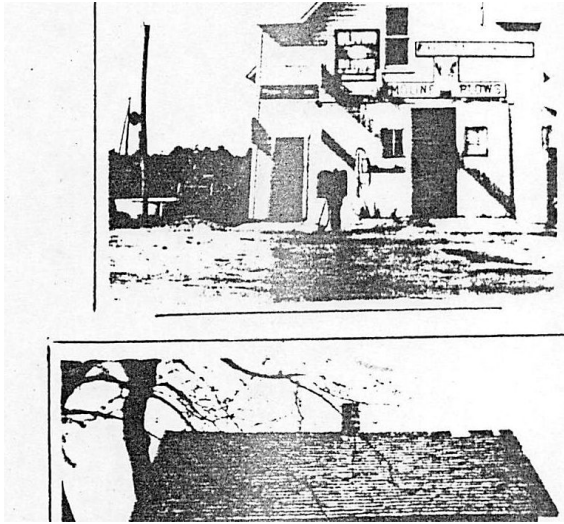
19-1920 WORKING IN THE CLARKSVILLE
MOVED TO MOTIVE SUPPLY SALESMAN.
BERKLEY WITH FRED McVEIGH WHO
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Oscar Johnson's garage, Berkley, Iowa.

GARAGE, BILL GOT TO KNOW AUTO-
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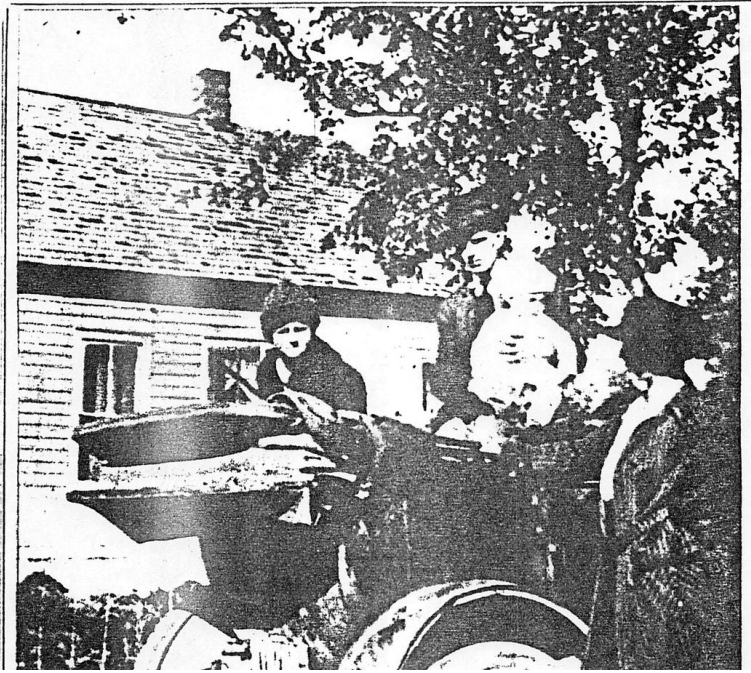
At Johnson's home: Oscar Johnson, Fred McVeigh, young Billy, Hazel, and Bill W.



The Wedekings' first Berkley home, 1919.

Later that day (fall 1919). This is the only Bill Wedeking and family picture taken outside our first Berkley home, by Luva McVeigh, early fall 1919. My dad's sitting on back of front seat. He's 23 and I'm 1 year old. Billy age 3 is on back seat. Mom's already a-lit — she's 22. Our first Ford Model “T” touring car (albeit previously driven) with top down.

ME 1919. MY DAD'S SITTING ON BACK OF FRONT SEAT. HE'S 23 AND
WAT I'M 1 YR OLD. BILLY AGE 3 IS ON BACK SEAT, MOM'S ALREADY
AY ALIT-SHE'S 22. OUR FIRST FORD MODEL 'T' TOURING
L 1919) CAR (ALBERT PREVIOUSLY DRIVEN) WITH TOP DOWN



The only Bill Wedeking family picture outside the first Berkley home, fall 1919.

February 1920: Hazel's Death

Feb. 6, 1920. First of February Hazel received word her folks were ill. Bundling up Billy and me, she took the next train to Dumont to be with them. She also was nearing term on her pregnancy. My dad received a telegram asking he come at once because of a serious illness. A severe snow storm was blowing, roads were impassable, so he took the next train, thinking it was Hazel's dad, John, who'd taken a turn for the worse. However, when he got off the train he was told it was Hazel, who'd died 1:30 AM that morning. She'd also gone into labor and the baby, a boy, had died at the same time.

DAD, JOHN, WHO'D TAKE
WHEN HE GOT OFF THE
WHO'D DIED 1:30 AM
LABOR AND THE BABY.

Name	Hazel P. Spang
When Born	Oct. 24, 1876
Where Born	Belmont
When Died	Feb. 6, 1920
When Married	Dec. 10, 1911
Where Married	Belmont
To Whom	W. E. Wedeking
How Many Children	Three

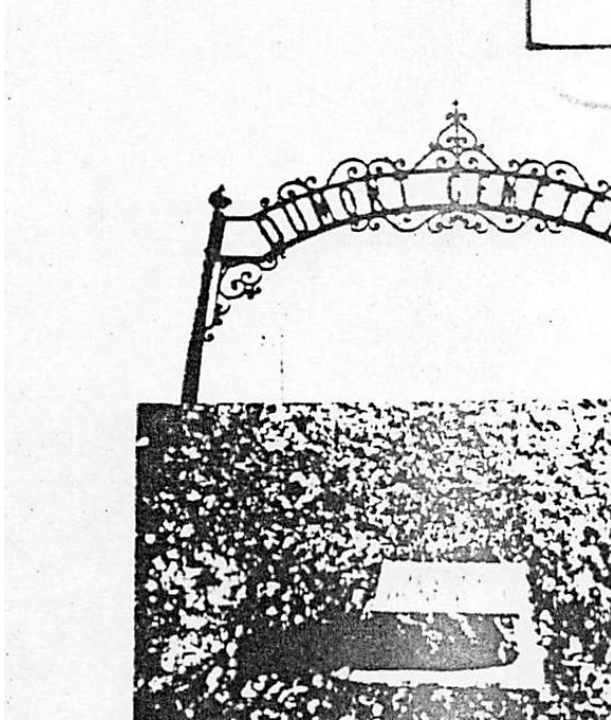
Hazel's obituary slip.

Because of the virulency of the “flu,” being epidemic in the post-W.W.I years, the funeral service was held next day in Springer's snow-covered

front yard. Burial was in the Springer family plot, Dumont Cemetery.
Simple headstone: “Hazel 1896–1920.”

She was 23 years old. Son Billy, 3½. “Frankie,” 1½. (Dead baby boy
also buried with his mother.)



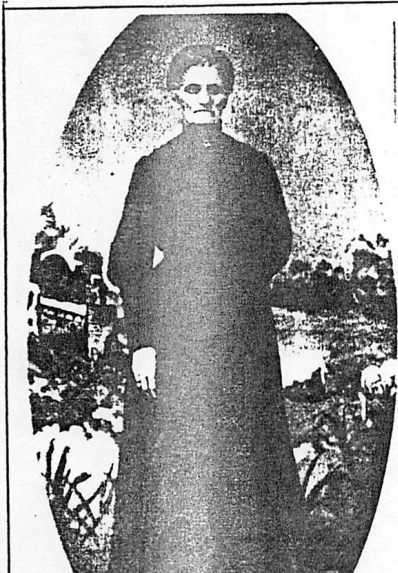


Hazel, and her simple headstone, "Hazel 1896–1920," Dumont Cemetery.

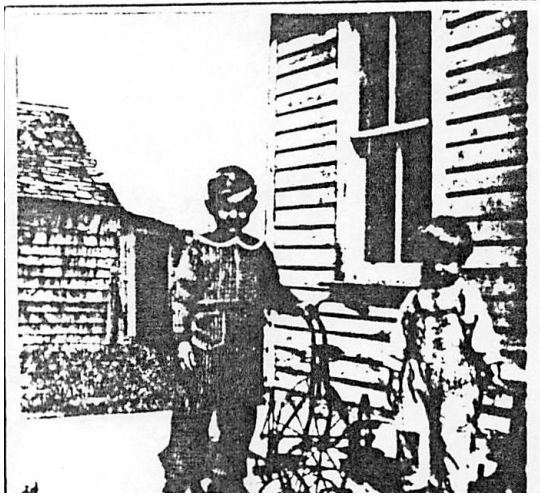
1920–1937: Grandma Wedeking Raises a Second Family

1920 on — Widower Berkley Bill, Aunt Marion, Grandma W. Comes to Stay. Life for “Berkley Bill” and sons had to go on. Aunt Marion Springer (Hazel's brother Frank's wife) took Billy and me until things settled down. My dad felt best for all was to place his sons in either the Odd Fellows orphanage or the Lutheran one in Waverly. Brother-in-law “Uncle Dick” Dieckmann said, “No, I've a better suggestion. Your mother, Grandma Wedeking's living alone in Clarksville. Why not have her come to Berkley and take over?” And this she did in 1920, at age 64, becoming surrogate mother to these two youngsters. So for the next 17 years, 1920–1937, “Grandma” (Grossmutter) raised a second family.

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IN 1920 AT AGE 64.
THESE TWO YOUNGSTERS
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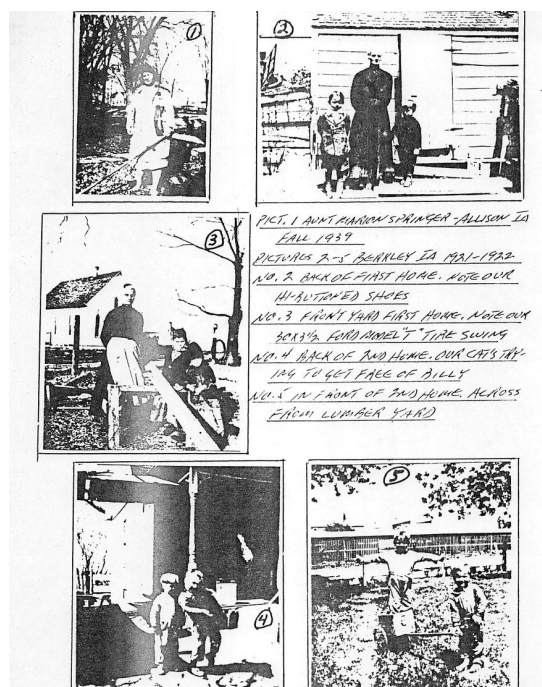
Grandma Minna Wedeking, age 64, with grandsons Billy and Frankie, Berkley, summer 1920.

1920–1923, Grandma W. Misses Clarksville. The four of us lived in Berkley until 1923. We'd moved into a larger house across from the lumber yard. Grandma Wedeking was kept quite busy “keeping house,” which included Billy starting school in 1921 and me in 1922. The school had one room and Miss Root was our teacher.

But Grandma was lonely, having been uprooted into a different environment. She'd spent the first 30 years of her life, 1856–1886, in Germany, and the next 34, 1886–1920, in America among her German-speaking family and friends. Now at age 64 she terribly missed Clarksville.

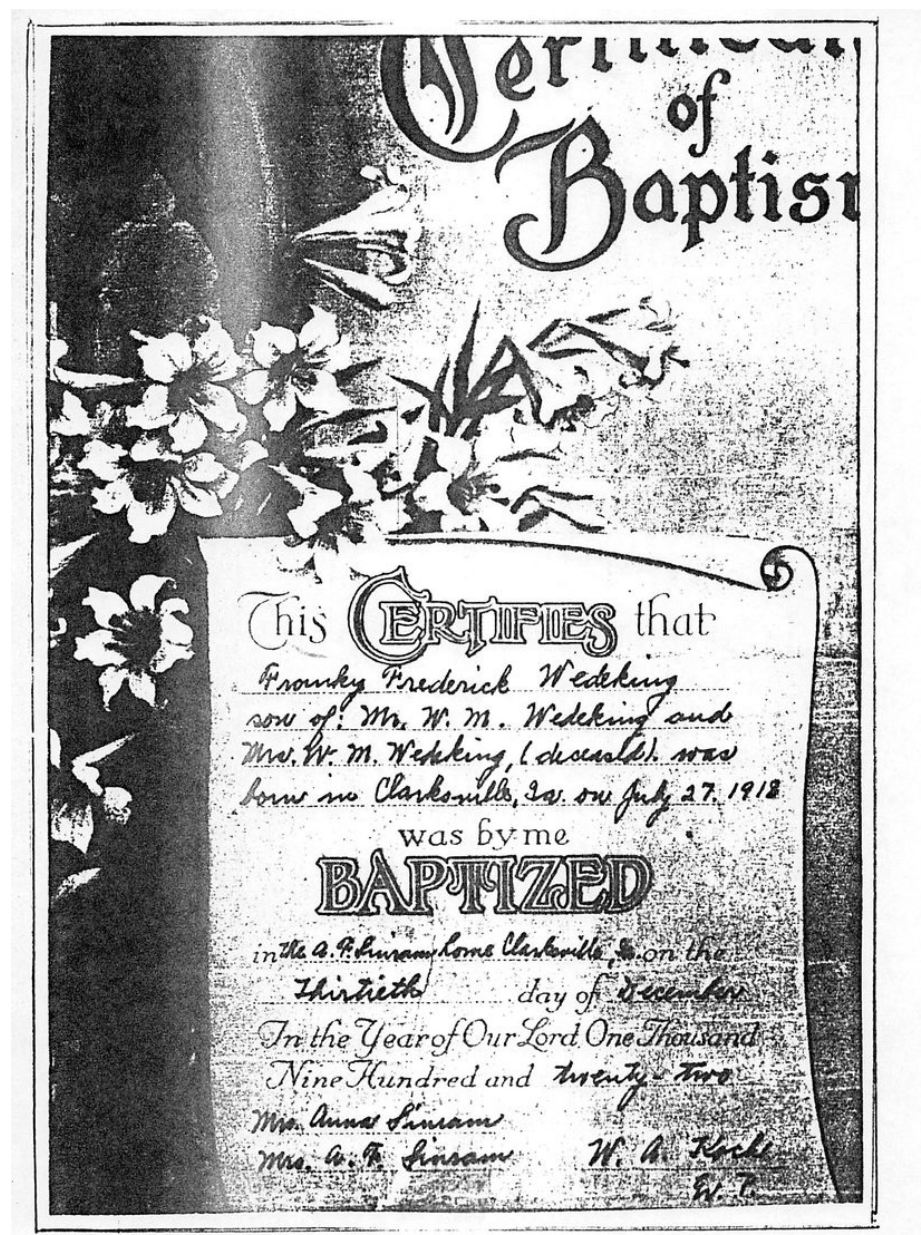
Visits to Clarksville. By now Dad's first Ford “T” touring car had been replaced with a Ford “T” 2-door 5-seat sedan, which we called our “stage-coach.” From time to time we'd drive to Clarksville and spend a long weekend with family. Winters were not drivable. In late 1922

Grandma took a train to Clarksville with Billy and me along. It was the Christmas holidays, and we were at Aunt Bertha's.



Aunt Marion Springer, and Berkley home scenes, 1921–1922.

Dec. 30, 1922. It was Saturday, Dec. 30th, and Ev. Pastor W.A. Koch came over (church was only a block away) and baptized Billy, now age 6½, and me, 4½ years old. For some reason, and I'll never know why, Aunt Bertha had my name put on the baptismal certificate as “Franky Frederick Wedeking,” whereas my legal birth certificate name was “Francis Lyle.” I now have as my surname “Franky Frederick Francis Lyle” (I usually use “F.L.”).

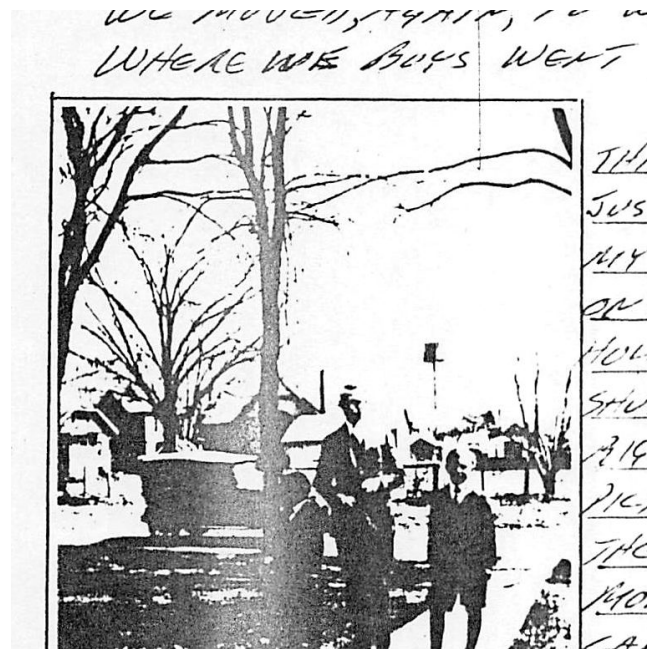


Baptismal certificate, "Franky Frederick Wedeking," Dec. 30, 1922.

1924 early. We moved from Berkley to Boone, Iowa early 1924. Bill was employed by the C.N.W.R.R. as a "call boy" at their round-house.

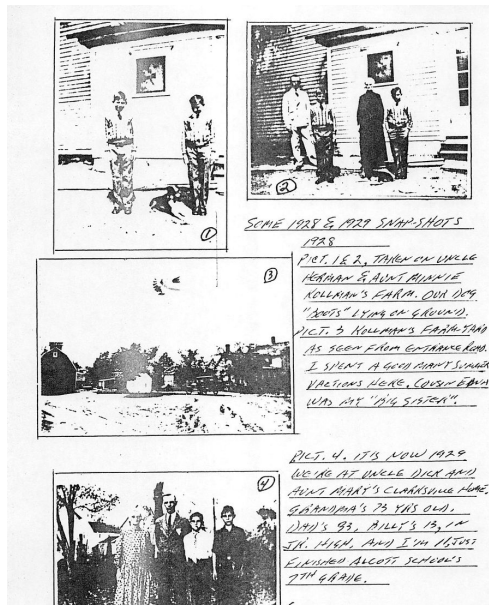
1924 late. This was only temporary, so the next move took us back "home" to Clarksville.

1924–1925. During this time my father found employment in Waterloo as a linotype operator. There-upon we moved, again, to Waterloo's west side, where we boys went to Edison School.



Clarksville, just before the move to Waterloo — Billy and Frank.

1926–1932. We lived on the west side a year, then moved to Waterloo's east side. First to 420 Logan Ave., then 228 Clay, then 208 Walnut — first house east of Allcott School. Here my brother and I finished grade school and Jr. High. All this time Grandma's still “keeping house.”



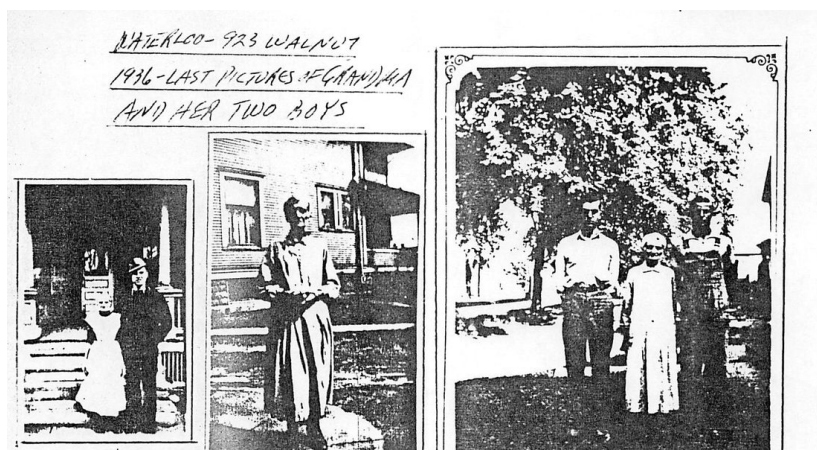
Snapshots, 1928–29: the Kollman farm and the Dieckman home in Clarksville.

1933–1935, Waterloo. Next and final move for the four of us was to 923 Walnut. Grandma Wedeking, at 77, still “keeping house.” Daughter “Aunt Mary” and “Uncle Dick” Dieckman now living across the river on Jefferson St. in west Waterloo. Grandma walks to their house occasionally. Her sister-in-law “Aunt Louise” Poppe's also living in Waterloo.

1935. Brother Bill finished high school in 1934, and I in 1935. Grandma came to my graduation at E.W.H.S.; she's 79 years old now. Now all 3 of us fellows are working full-time — Dad at Chamberlain's as a machinist, Bill as a lathe operator at John Deere's, and I'm a wholesale hardware clerk at Cutler Hardware. Money crunch eased, so my dad bought Grandma a brand-new “Della-Maid” electric washing machine, and brother Bill and I got her her first electric flat iron. Up till now she'd been using stove-top-heated sad-irons all her life. Dad's still driving Model “T” Ford — I think it was a 1927, Henry Ford's last 4-cylinder.

June 1, 1937, Grandma Died, Age 81. Grandma Wedeking was with us until June 1st, 1937, still keeping house, when death came to her

rather suddenly in our 923 Walnut home. Funeral service held in Clarksville's Immanuel Church, and burial in Pleasant Valley Cemetery beside Grandpa Fritz, twins Otto and Edward, and young Fritz. America had been her home for 51 years and 2 days.



Waterloo, 1936 — the last photos of Grandma with her two boys.

After June 1st 1937, now without Grandma, we fellows went our several ways:

- Brother Bill married Louise Campbell, moved to Minneapolis, raised 4 daughters.
 - I moved to Chicago, attended Moody Bible Institute, married Ruth Fordyce, whom I'd known from high-school days. Parents of 2 sons.
 - Dad, now 41, never remarried. Went to work for the Reinbeck Iowa Courier, then moved to Chicago in 1942, continuing as a printer until his death in 1969, age 74. At his request he was buried in Clarksville's Lynnwood Cemetery.
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Some Springer History

Before writing “Fini,” I must touch briefly on my Grandpa John and Grandma Florence Springer, parents of my mother Hazel Pearl Springer. (A. Mr. M.C. Springer in 1881 entered in the Wash. D.C. Library of Congress a genealogical book, “History of the Springer Family.” In it, his chart no. 7 traces them back to the Landgrave of Thuringia (b. 1042, d. 1128), who'd been given the name of “The Springer” in the year 1089.)

David & Sally, My Great-Great-Grandparents. (From Franklin County Historical Records, Iowa.) David Springer (b. Dutchess County, N.Y., 1417–1797 [as recorded]) m. Sally Waddell (b. Jasper County, Ill., 11-14-1811). In 1832, living in Galena, Ill. Parents of:

Francis & Maria, My Great-Grandparents. Francis Mahlon Springer (b. Jasper County, Ill., 7-9-1826) m. Maria F. Green (b. Daviess County, Ill., 8-14-1836, d. 1885, buried in Hampton, Ia. cemetery) 12-4-1854 in Shellsburg. Came to Franklin County in a covered wagon in spring 1855. Previously lived in Linn, Buchanan Iowa counties, and Galena, prior to Shellsburg. Parents of:

John and Florence, My Grandparents. John G. Springer (b. 1-24-1858, d. 2-3-1925) m. *Florence Green (b. 4-5-1863, d. 1-31-1923). Parents of 4 sons — Hugh, Art, Leo and Frank — and 3 daughters — Blanche (Helt), Hazel (Wedeking) and Gladys (Howard).

** According to Butler County records, Grandma's death resulted from “mitral insufficiency” — heart trouble — in 1923. My mother's concern for her mom was noted as early as December 1915.*

Hazel and William. Hazel Pearl Springer (b. 10-30-1896, d. 2-6-1920) m. William H. Wedeking (b. 11-30-1895, d. 10-30-1969), 12-18-1915.

In Closing, 1989

It's my hope that you, my readers, will visit several “hallowed” areas in Butler County, and at the same time visualize in your mind's eye the 2nd half of the 1800's, sans: T.V., radio, telephone, electric lights, movies, indoor plumbing, automobiles, airplanes, computers, etc., etc. Suggested spots:

- Pleasant Valley Church and Cemetery

Lot 44 — “Vater” Fritz and “Mutter” Minna Wedeking; young Fritz; twins Otto and Edward

Lot 43 — Sister Mary and Louis Wedeking

Lot 22 — ” Louise ” Henry Poppe

- Immanuel Church, Clarksville, and Lynnwood Cemetery

Lot N1 — Daughter Mary and D. Dieckmann

Lot N2 — ” Bertha and August Sinram

Lot R10 — Son William H. Wedeking

- South Vilmar Church and Cemetery (north of Allison)

Lot 40 — Daughter Minnie and Herman Kollman, and baby Valeda

- Dumont Cemetery

Lot B9 — “Father” John and “Mother” Florence Springer; son Hugh and daughter Hazel (Wedeking)

“Fini”

It is now time to say “Fini” and to close the cover. Time, space, opportunity, family-branch complexities, etc. conspire against my keeping on. Many, many additional thoughts, ideas, memories — lotsa good things, and yes, some not so good — keep piling into my mind.

I thank you for taking the time to look over my shoulder at our Wedekings' saga, and thereby getting to know them a bit better.

It's also my hope that you who are of Wedeking descent can conclude that we've a fine German-American heritage, and will say “thanks” Grandpa and Grandma for coming to this, our great country, the United States of America.

1989 — F.L. Wedeking, Des Plaines, Illinois

Post Script

Following inscription taken from a Lynnwood cemetery headstone, chiseled in granite almost a century ago (1893):

“The grassy mound the breeze kiss / But hides a human chrysalis / The coffined forms that lie below / In fairer vesture yet shall glow / Sure as the sun and dew and rain / Shall waken earth to life again / So sure shall the grave yield her dead / By guardian angels gently led: / And we shall find them in the fold / Whose gates are pearl and streets are gold.”

My thanks to my family for their input of pictures and letters, and for valued help from friends and sources: Rudolf Preineke's “Years Ago,” Rev. Ralph Wedeking's genealogies, Clarksville Star items, Pleasant Valley Church records, Maryland Historical Society, Franklin County Historical Records, Washington D.C. National Archives, Butler County

Historical Society, Des Plaines, Ill. Reference Library, North German Lloyd Line, and the German Travel Bureau.