

# German Roots

*Finding the Moschels*



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# Introduction

For a time I was ashamed to understand my German roots. Would I find Nazi-crazed SS officers? Or would I find the cold and calculating people who took the human skin of Jews, gypsies, and homosexuals and made it into lamp shades? I searched every other branch of my family tree before starting the German hunt, even though I was more German than anything else in ancestry. I just did not want to go there. This is how the story unfolded of uncovering my German ancestry and meeting living relatives in today's Germany.

As an amateur genealogist since my early 20's, I was eager to discover my roots and take them back across the pond and understand the people who came to America and eventually were my ancestors. I had collected facts and neatly put them in charts and started using Family Tree Maker on my PC. That satisfied me on one level, but on another level I wanted to understand these people's lives.

My first effort in doing so was writing a novel about my Scottish relatives who had owned an iron foundry in Arbroath. It was my first attempt to write a novel after writing several books in the field of Counseling Psychology with my husband, Jack Loughary. I was clear about my limited ability for novel writing, but it was fun and it provided the thing to do during an Oregon winter in 1993, particularly after visiting Scotland in September 1993 and seeing everything first hand.

Another Oregon winter came and in winter 1994 I searched my Irish roots and wrote another part fact and part fiction story of my great grandparents who emigrated from Ireland in 1863. I was immersed in understanding the life and times of people who eventually ended up in Illinois. I plodded through history of the Irish Famine, the unending conflict with England, and came to love the Irish people I met along the way. Another book resulted which I gave my U.S. Irish relatives in spring 1995 before going to Ireland in June 1995 and meeting Irish relatives still living on the land my great grandparents emigrated from in 1863. Total surprise.

Itchy genealogy feet kept me wanting more. In 1995 I decided to search my Moschel roots in Webenheim, Germany. I had been to Webenheim in 1979 during a Fulbright sabbatical in Sweden but just whisked through the town not knowing where and how to start. As an early email adopter, I decided to see if the web could provide information. I posted on a German bulletin board, and even though I did not find relatives, I found a German who responded to my quest and eventually an article was written in the nearest local paper of something to the effect that 'American woman uses internet to find her relatives'. At the time this was novel. On November 10, 1995, I received an email from a local researcher who had read the newspaper article and immediately took me back 250 years to 1530 and Hans Moschel. I was hooked.

Time passes, more Oregon winters come, and in summer 1997 my husband and I traveled to Germany and again go to Webenheim and nearby Mimbach. I was ready to write and envisioned a grand story that would go from 1550 to November 10, 1995, even including WWII and

somehow coming to grips with my German past. It would be epic, challenging *Gone With The Wind* in its depth and vision, and cover not only Germany, but Illinois, and Nebraska, and other places the German emigrants moved to when they came to America. Yes, a little grand, which began to dwarf as research and writing began. Oregon rain, though, has a way of keeping writers to task.

The German research and writing persisted and my husband and I built a personal website, a place to host our writings and other things of interest. I put the initial parts of the German Moschel story on our website in September 2000. Little did I know that a few months later in late February 2001 a 28-year-old German man, Markus Klein, would be riding on a train after attending Carnival for Mardi Gras in Cologne and read about this new thing called Google. After he got home he went to his computer and typed his hometown 'Webenheim' into Google, the genealogy and stories popped up from our website and he read them and thought about the connection.

Then a few days later on March 4, 2001, Markus Klein emailed me. He documented he was a Moschel relative and interested in family history. Less than a month later, Markus discovered from his grandmother she still had pictures sent from the new world back to Germany in the 1860's that were American Moschel relatives. Really? We have never turned back. I gathered the resources of other U. S. relatives who were interested, particularly first cousin Greg Rittenhouse, a way-above-the-amateur stage genealogist, and second cousin Elly Hess who has been an avid genealogist her entire adult life.

This ebook story will unfold as it happened. I start the story, and Markus and Greg will join as we did when doing it and discovering what we knew of each other, which is a big part of the story.

This ebook is the continuation of what our Moschel relatives did in the U.S. in 1939-1940. Our thanks to George Moschel and wife Anna Klein Moschel for compiling the known history of their German relatives at that time when it could have been a very unpopular thing to do and distributing it to their American family. Our story is also the continuation of what Markus' grandparents remembered and preserved. We were astounded as we reconnected after a 150 year absence, just how much of the American part of the story had been preserved in the small German village from which our relatives left in 1862 to come to the new land.

And yes, my husband and I made one more trip back to Webenheim in 2002 and met Markus and his family. I mean my family. Circle completed.

Theresa Ripley, ©2013, Eugene, Oregon

Markus Klein, Homburg, Germany

Greg Rittenhouse, Los Angeles, California

# Oregon 1995

In mid summer 1995, what we normally call the dog days of summer that make you want to stay inside with the air conditioning, like the Oregon winter rain makes you want to stay inside as well, I found myself musing about my German roots after the Irish story was completed and put on the shelf. I knew at some point I wanted to write about the Margarets. I am Theresa Margaret, my mother was Blanche Margaret, her mother was Amelia Margaret, her mother was Margaret, and then her mother was Margaret. I wanted to understand the women I never met, meaning my great and great great grandmothers. I knew my great grandmother emigrated with her mother from Germany in 1862. Why? I knew my great, great grandmother was a widow when she moved to America and was moving to a new land with several children. How did she do it? And again, why? Little did I know eventually we would find two more generations back of Margarets, making seven in all, and that my middle name was German through and through and had history to it. Lots of history.

I communicated with one of my second cousins, Elly Hess in San Carlos, California, who had the original chest that my great great grandmother brought from Germany. My great great grandfather was a carpenter in Webenheim, Germany. I envisioned he made the chest which made sense. I speculated perhaps in the hidden corners of that chest were things brought from Germany. I would weave a story of lost letters found in this chest and make a story, whether they existed or not. Elly complied with my fantasy by going through every crevice of the chest. Nothing found. I was not deterred.

In September, 1995, I emailed a German bulletin board trying to find out anything I could about the area of Webenheim, Germany, from where our Moschels relatives had emigrated. I knew it was a toss into the wild, but why not try. A couple of German men responded, one was a forester, Rainer, and because I lived in Oregon and understood forestry to some extent, we continued the contact. Then a German newspaper journalist emailed and published the story that appeared in the *Saarbruecker Zeitung* which eventually led to the email received on November 10, 1995, taking us back to 1530 in our Moschel German roots. I was on a roll and decided to go with it.

Then, as often happens, life intervened. My uncle, Don Phillips, had been very enthusiastic about my previous genealogy efforts and this was no exception. He was my mother's brother and interested in our joint genealogy. I told him immediately of the discovery, knowing I probably did not have much longer to share with him about such things, or anything. Don died of colon cancer on December 29, 1995. I went to visit him and my aunt twice in Phoenix in the 3 months prior to his death, and on the first occasion he gave me the materials he had received at the attendance of the 50th anniversary of his liberation from a German POW camp. The liberation occurred on April 29, 1945, and the 50th reunion had occurred in Ohio in April 1995. In the last weeks of Don's life I learned the most I had learned about his POW experience and tucked all that knowledge into my personal data bank. After his death Aunt Sally, Don's widow, and I put

together a book of Don's poems, a great little collection, and gave it to family members. Then we put together an account of his German POW experience and gave that to family members as well. The historical German ancestry did not seem as important at that time. I knew family stories of Don being questioned in German POW camp of why he betrayed the Fatherland, his mother's birth name being Klein and grandparents Moschel.

My husband and I were also in the midst of house building and moving to a new home in Eugene from Portland, Oregon. We had lived in Eugene before, Jack much longer than I, and we had both professed at the University of Oregon. Thus, after living in Tucson and then Portland, we were heading back to Eugene in March 1996. We were becoming veterans of building and moving. By May of 1996, we began to settle into Eugene. We were teaching at a online university, and thus we had the pleasure of students and no negative aspect of faculty meetings and committees. I was ready to think about German stories again. Fresh in my mind was that Germany was the place my uncle was interred for 20 months in WWII and a prisoner of this regime. It was also the place where my great grandmother, Margaret, came from in her youth. With this ambivalence of wanting to know and not wanting to know about Germany I began to research and try to understand the country I was both loving and hating. I started my research in 16th century Germany. That seemed remote enough from Don's experience, and took me to a place I enjoyed....history. After much reading I wrote my first 1000 words about 16th century Germany and my 10th great grandfather Hans Moschel on July 29, 1996, another dog day of summer. I got to the point of trying to absorb every aspect of what Hans' life would have been like in the small German village of Mimbach in the 16th Century and, in reality, coming closer to my German past inch by inch or century by century. Thus, in the dog days of summer 1996 I turned back to Mimbach, Germany, in 1605.

# The Moschels of Mimbach

The story of the Moschel family, at least as we know it, begins in the 16th century in Mimbach, a small town near the French border in the Rhineland area of Germany and one mile from the small village of Webenheim. The story starts with Hans Moschel (born circa 1530), his son Daniel, and his grandson, also named Hans. On this day in 1605 shortly after Hans the younger was born his grandfather was preoccupied with deciding upon a suitable baptism gift for his grandson. This was an important concern for the older man who wanted to create a gift which would convey his feelings about the importance of his grandson and provide a suitable memory of him throughout the boy's life.

Hans, the grandfather, was born about 1530 which places him directly in the time of Luther's Reformation and probably among the first baptized in the Mimbach Reform Church. Hans died after 1609. We can surmise that the status of the Moschel family in the 16th and 17th centuries was considerable in their small community. Hans the Elder in all probability was well educated, in the sense of the Middle Ages.

Hans the Elder had a son named Daniel who was born about 1565 and lived in Mimbach and died there before 1630. Daniel was a bellringer at the Mimbach Church which was an important position in the community. Daniel was the father of Hans the younger.

The younger Hans died February 6, 1686, in Mimbach. He was magistrate of Mimbach from 1665-1682. In the late Middle Ages a magistrate was a master or head who had great literary or scientific distinction and was a civil officer empowered to administer and enforce the law. Mimbach had one mayor and seven magistrates at the time Hans was magistrate.

On this day in 1605 Hans the Elder had no way of knowing just how important his infant grandson and namesake was destined to become. Nevertheless, even if he lacked a specific vision, he had general expectations and strong hopes about his grandson's eventual accomplishments. Thus, the baptismal gift had to be consistent with the importance of his grandson and, he had to admit to himself, something with high probability of remaining in the boy's possession.

The time was short, because the baptism was the following day, and little of it could be wasted considering unsuitable alternatives. Being reasonably direct in his style and guided by the value he placed on language, Hans the Elder quickly narrowed the baptismal gift to a written document. It was clear he must produce a document both personally and intellectually significant that would meet the requirements of the coming event and remain a cherished possession. That was the easy part. The difficult task was to decide on what kind of document and write it so it would meet his high expectations (and those of other family members, he realized).

And so began the long day of *The Baptismal Gift*, an attempt to connect one generation to another in a few choice thoughts and words. As you would expect if you knew Hans the Elder, the mechanical aspects of the project were very well organized.

# Mimbach 1605

Hans was sitting at the table in the center of the room. Enough light was streaming through the window so he could accomplish the task at hand without lighting candles. That was what was so nice about the longer days in spring. The light allowed for more. He started to assemble what he needed. With great care, and some pain, he got out of the chair and started for the other side of the room.

The paper must be special. His neighbor made it especially for him. Hans traded for it with herbs from his garden. He kept the paper in a trunk, laid flat, so it would be both dry and ready for the ink which he next prepared. He collected the lampblack, which he had ground to a very fine soot, and mixed just a drop of boiled linseed oil to it. Next to the lampblack he set a small container of water ready to mix the two for his writing ink.

He walked to the other side of the room and reached up on the high ledge on the wall, moving his hand over the long narrow wooden case which he had crafted to hold his pens, and by instinct brought down his favorite. He looked at the long, grey quill and remembered the day he found the goose outer wing feather by the pond just outside of the village. Hans brought the quill over to the center table and took out his knife and began to recut the tip to have as fine a point as possible for this very important chore.

His essential tools were now assembled: paper, ink, and pen. He was ready to start. He had thought about this for a long time but now that he was apparently ready, he still hesitated. Would this be good enough? Should he do something else? Would son Daniel appreciate it? All the resolution he had garnered for this job was dissipating in a matter of moments. If only he could get his wife's approval, but that was just his wishful thinking which usually managed to be with him every day. If only Anna could see the new baby. If only Anna could tell Daniel how much this baby means. If only Anna could tell him what to bring to the baptismal ceremony. If only Anna could be here.....and wipe away his loneliness.

Ah, the musings of an old man Hans thought. In these last few years since Anna's death his thoughts and memories were the most comforting part of his day. The rest was just habitual. Getting up, working as much as he could with Daniel, eating, sleeping, and then starting all over again. It really was not as bad as the short litany swimming around in his head. Daniel and the rest of his children were good to him; there were many grandchildren around, but his heart was gone. But today he was trying to put the heart back in himself for his latest grandson, who was also a namesake.

The baptism was day after tomorrow. It would take place at the Mimbach church where both he and his son Daniel had been baptized. Little Hans, born late last night, seemed healthy, as was his mother. Hans had no idea Daniel was going to name his first born son after him. He privately wished such a thing, but had not even allowed himself the luxury of thinking it so. At his age, living in and for the next generation was about all there was left to do on this earth...except to

have the memories of how it was. Stop, he thought, today is not for sadness, today is for making a gift little Hans might have forever.

That thought comforted him, but also made his task seem formidable. He stopped, although he had not yet started, got up, and walked the room the best he could with his painful foot. Pain seemed to be a part of his day like sadness was. It was to be expected.

After only a few agitated moments on his feet, Hans settled back down at his chair at the table in the center of the room with his paper, quill, and ink. It should be quite simple he thought again. I will write down a few notations about my and Daniels' lives on this very distinctive paper; roll it up; and tie it with a strip of leather. The idea was there and now it just needed to be implemented.

Hans took the least attractive sheet of paper and decided he would make a few notations as practice and then rewrite his message once again for Hans. That way there would be two copies, one for him and one for his young grandson.

The rumination for the last several days about this gift seemed to melt away. It was so clear when he first thought of it. At age 75 some days were clearer than others. The day he thought of this he could have started. It was a beautiful early spring day and he was in his garden listening to the church bells chime. As the last chime was echoing out of his ears he thought of writing the yet unborn child. But then he had no paper; he had not made the ink; his quill was not sharp; and his grandson not yet arrived. Now Hans had all necessary items, even the grandson, but his mind was not clear.

He stared down at the paper and wondered if it would stay blank. Come on Hans he could hear himself say. You've thought all this through. Since it's a baptism, you were going to start with writing about past family baptisms. Hans shook his right hand and head, reaching for his favorite quill and dipping it first in the lampblack followed by the water and wrote on his practice sheet, *Baptism of Daniel* in a labored, but quite beautiful handwriting. Every time he wrote he thought of his father teaching him to write, first in Latin and then in German. There...finally, some words on the paper. When he deliberated about this gift, his thoughts were to start with Daniel's baptism. The year was 1565, over 40 years ago, and he was only 35. Ah, a lifetime ago he mused.

Even though Hans was still in the same room as a few moments ago, in his mind he was back in time, a comfortable place for him, and he was in a house with Anna and several children. Daniel's actual baptism was a blur to him. Daniel was after Jacob, Bartholemaus, and Christian, but before Charlotte, Elizabeth, and Nicholas.

Hans did not like to admit to Daniel that memories about his baptism were less than indelibly imprinted on his mind. Daniel would probably not understand at this point. This was Daniel's first son. Hans remembered well the baptism of his first born, Jacob. He and Anna were so young and Jacob was like a miracle. After that, it was still a miracle, but the household was full and birth after birth filled the house and their lives.

Think Hans. Think. The year is 1565 and Daniel is born. What was it like? What was he like? What were you like?

Hans knew he was at the birth of his son as he had been at the birth of the prior three. He missed only Charlotte's birth by being away in Blieskastel at the time. Their family had used the same midwife for all the family births. By the time Daniel was born Hans was prepared for what was to come and had even read the midwives' manual, *Rosengarten*, by Eucharius Rosslin, a physician in Frankfurt and the authority on birthing and infant and child care.

Hans closed his eyes and could "see" the midwife bathing the newborns (was it Daniel or someone else, he did not know) in warm water, cleaning out the nose, placing a little olive oil in the eyes, massaging the anus, and smearing the newborn with nut oil to harden the skin. The midwife was a wise and knowledgeable woman, and with hundreds of births behind her, she radiated confidence to all present on such an occasion.

One corner of their house was always set up as a nursery. In it they had the many items needed in their household because they usually had an infant, a couple of toddlers, and older young children. Hans closed his eyes again to see if he could think of everything there. He remembered the walking bench, the wooden tub, the potty chair, the stick horses, and always the swaddling clothes. The main memory Hans had of the nursery corner was an infant covered from the neck down in cloth binding the hands and legs. It kept the babies warm and their limbs grew straight. It was not uncommon in the Moschel household for one infant to go out of swaddling clothes just in time for the next newborn.

Hans was unsuccessful in remembering Daniel's birth and baptism, which probably occurred within hours of each other. A timely baptism assured the newborn a place in heaven if he died suddenly. A blur of infants was all he was remembering and children swaddled in the nursery corner. He knew if he went to the church records and looked at the record of godparents that would help. He would do that later today.

If he thought of Daniel as a young child, he did have a distinct memory. Daniel coughing. And wheezing. And labored breathing. It use to scare Hans and Anna dreadfully. They would try wet cloths; a handkerchief over his nose and mouth; maple seeds mashed with honey; cottonseeds crushed in a cooked egg yolk; and olive oil behind the ears. Hans marveled he could remember this so clearly and forget entirely his birth and baptism. Daniel was the first child they thought might die and the nights and days staying up with him were like yesterday.

Hans looked down at his paper and crossed out the words *Baptism of Daniel*. This was going nowhere. He thought about getting up again and going outside to look at the new growth appearing daily around his house in the spring weather. The herbs were doing well. The grass was growing. The weeds were growing better. The sunlight beckoned him. He thought that should be no escape for what now was appearing to be a very bad idea.

Hans reached for his goose quill once more; dipped it in the lampblack and moisten it with water; and wrote these words under the crossed out words.

*My Baptism 1530*

In his failure as a father, he wondered if he would fail as a son. Were his memories of his parents and childhood clearer than those of Daniel? Perhaps now he should take a few moments and stroll slowly, although the pain in his foot increased as the day went on, to the Mimbach church and see what being there would do for his morale and memory and the task at hand.

As soon as Hans stepped out the door he could see the church. It placed center stage in the village and the bell in the tower was the voice of the community. Each step he took toward the church was like a step back in time. A time when the church was everything to him and his parents and siblings. His children would never understand how much turmoil existed when he was young and the church was young. In many ways he and the church grew up together.

Yes, we grew up together, Hans thought again, that's how it was. But now the church was growing and he was dying. Not a sad thought, just a true one.

The Mimbach Reform Church started in the late 1520s. Hans' father, Christian, was the first preacher for the church. All of Hans children knew that fact, but little did they comprehend just what it meant. Christian was nothing less than a revolutionary, a part of the tide of religious people who followed Martin Luther in the late 1520s.

Hans made his way to the door of the church and opened it. As he opened the door, he could hear the words of his father from the pulpit. He was an evangelical speaker and he brought THE WORD OF GOD to the people like no priest had ever done. The mystery of God had been in Latin in Mimbach prior to Christian's preaching and he brought THE WORD in German to the village.

His father preached what Luther wrote and preached. He told the parishioners transubstantiation was unbelievable. He served communion as both bread and wine. And most important he spoke to them about the problems of the day and how to solve them in clear and reasonable terms. All this sounds so reasonable now. At the time it was going against all that was sacred and centuries of belief. Reform was needed. Corruption abound. Christian was a soldier in changing the church forever.

Reform and change was the name of the day and the people of Mimbach reformed whether they wanted to do so or not. The Dukes of the town of Mimbach required that. Hans shuddered as he began to think of the changes of those days and how his father was in the center of it all.

Controversy was a part of life then. Controversy in the church. Controversy in the towns. Families torn apart. Neighboring villages torn apart. All in the name of God.

And his father, Christian, was speaking THE WORD OF GOD.

Hans had heard the story over and over of his father's coming to Mimbach. Hans went to the pulpit, braced his arms on the lectern, resting his most painful foot by leaning, and began to think back to when he could hear his father from this very spot. Christian's words and voice began filling the air and Hans was absorbing it all.

Christian arrived in Mimbach in 1523 as a former monk and intended to learn a trade. Townspeople knew he was a follower of Luther and asked him to preach with the tacit

agreement of the Town Council. His words energized the people and they wanted him to preach. Some of his most eager followers were members of the family of the Dukes of Zweibruecken. They owned the city in every way that is, and was, important. When the Dukes decided to go with Luther the rest of the city were forced to go with them. And Christian kept preaching THE WORD OF GOD. Hans realized his father didn't really make converts in the evangelical sense of the word but he converted the most important people, the Dukes. The rest were made to follow. And they did.

Christian's word spread and God's word spread throughout Mimbach according to the tenets of Luther. There was no alternative.

Hans could not really imagine those years of his father's life. He had tried; in fact tried many times to understand the man who had so energized their village. Changed it forever. This was Christian's legacy. It was his legacy. Now it was his grandson's legacy.

Where was Hans going with his all this? His family clearly had a history worthy of remembering, but how would it all get down. Who would remember it and retell it to others? Should it be retold?

Hans stepped away from the pulpit. This was not really his place. In fact religion had never been that important to him. He did not know why. His mother's cloister experience and his father's fervent religion should have had more impact on him. Evenings in their house were filled with reciting catechism. Long before he could say the words he remembers all in the house repeating together phrases, words, more words.

Words, yes it all seemed like words. They were good words as far as Hans was concerned, but they never meant as much as to him as they did to his father and mother. Perhaps because Hans never had to gain permission or fight to say them as his father did time and again in those early years of the 1520s. The time one lives means everything Hans thought to himself. His church and religion were accepted in Mimbach now. Lutherism had been accepted and now, more recently, Calvinism. Changes. Through it all his family was a part of it. Currently Daniel was well established in the church and Hans knew that would bode well for his young grandson. Position in the church was important for a Mimbach family.

Times change. People change. Mimbach was no longer the village of the 1520s. They had passed into a new century and Hans had passed into this century as well. He was now part of the 17th century but felt with every part of his being a product of the 16th century. The changes. The transitions from old to new.

As Hans stepped away from the front of the church, a place that was his father's domain, his father's voice diminished, like it did later in his own life, particularly after Calvinism came to the village. Christian, then, no longer represented the CORRECT message.

Hans wanted to change what he was thinking about. This was getting too real. He wanted to find the godparents of son Daniel and brought his thinking to that specific task. The Kuester was not available now so he could not look at the records of the church. No matter Hans thought. He was getting both more patient and impatient with the idea of his gift. If it worked, it worked; if

not, he would do something else. He could remember his own godparents and he would write about that to his grandson and namesake. His godparents were chosen by his mother, the woman whose life held as much turmoil and revolution as his father's. From cloistered nun to mother of nine, two more stillborn, and wife of the village evangelical preacher. This, too, was the legacy of his grandson.

Hans walked slowly back to the door of the church and readied to go back to his house. At the door he turned, looked back at the pulpit and to the front row, and he could see his father preaching, his mother in the front row, and he and all his siblings in a row. The spring light was beaming through the open window and THE WORD OF GOD was coming back to Mimbach from Christian if only for an instance. Christian was a remarkable man, Hans thought, and she was a remarkable woman. They rebelled against the times; broke contact with their families and the religion of their youth; and lived what they believed. Remarkable people, truly remarkable, Hans uttered to himself and then he shut the door of the church after himself.

The slow walk back to the house gave him time to assemble his thoughts. When he got back to his quill, paper, and ink, he wrote down the following under

*My Baptism 1530*

*Father administered sacrament*

*Mother choose godparents*

*Ritual performed in Mimbach Church In Luther Times Prior to Calvinism*

Hans knew he could come back to these phrases and write a bit more under each of them. He felt a sense of accomplishment. He left a little space on the paper and then wrote *My Early Childhood*. At this pace Hans realized it was going to take all day. So what? What is there more important to do? Nothing.

Ah, my early childhood, a minute or more into thinking and Hans almost laughed out loud realizing the most vivid memory coming to his mind was lice...lice...and more lice. Many of his earliest memories were of being covered with lice and he and his parents picking them off. Lice infested the household many times and twice the entire family had to move because of lice infestation in the house. Isn't it interesting I think of Daniel's coughing and my lice? Well, life is made of misery and misery probably is not far from the word memory, Hans conceded, but he knew lice was not going to make it to the baptismal record for his grandson.

What were my days like? Hans thought and bits and pieces came to mind. Most pieces reminded him how strict his father was. According to the rule of the day a child needed to be reared to get the bestiality out and make a rational, self-controlled child which would translate into the same as an adult. Adults should be rational, not emotional, people. Hans thought his father had succeeded on that score. But what were my days like, he thought again? He could almost hear his father's admonitions on proper daily conduct.

Sleep a correct amount.

Say the Lord's prayer.  
Thank God for this day.  
Honor your parents.  
Eat and get ready for school.  
Be obedient at school and answer quickly.  
Do not harm fellow students.  
Read every day and always from the Scripture.  
Correct your faults and be a better person.  
Go home directly after school and help at home.  
Have good table manners and sit straight.  
Be clean.  
Listen to all that speak, but say nothing until you are asked.  
Do not put candles out with fingers.  
Expect punishment for giggling.

Hans could remember much more, but this reminded him of the regime that was important to his parents, really his father, and it made him a very obedient, actually fearing, child. What he remembered the most were mealtimes. The rules were so clear. The punishments clearer. God was present before, during, and after the meals and catechism was the standard in the evenings.

The order...the discipline...God...it was all a part of his childhood. Hans remembered his father as stern, perhaps harsh would be a better word, and he retained with every fiber of his being the incident when his father forbade him to be in his presence for three days and asked him to write a letter to beg for his forgiveness. Hans shuddered. He could not even recall the transgression. He certainly recalled the punishment.

Hans looked down at this paper.

*Baptism of Daniel*

*My Baptism 1530*

*Father administered sacrament*

*Mother choose godparents*

*Ritual performed in Mimbach Church In Luther Times Prior to Calvinism*

*My Early Childhood*

This is all he had done since he started. He was both discouraged and encouraged. Discouraged that it makes no sense to try and pass on a sense of what was, that is over and done with now. What is good will be passed on through me Hans thought, and probably what is bad is passed on as well. Young Hans will make his own way through his grandfather. He did not know what this new century would present to him, but he hoped Daniel would try as hard to be a good father as he had, and with a lighter touch than his own father.

Hans took his quill, cleaned it, and put it back in the box on the ledge. The ink was set to the side of the table and the sheets of paper put back in the trunk.

Maybe tomorrow. If not then, the next day. Maybe.

# Oregon 1996

As 1996 was winding down in the last quarter I was immersed in trying to understand the history of where I was born in Illinois. As a farm kid in central Illinois no matter where you live later that background is a part of you. It's not only family, but it is the land and how it shapes everyone who is a part of it. By 1996 my parents had been deceased for 20 years and my only sibling deceased for 10 years. They had remained in Illinois all their lives and were buried there. I was the one to venture elsewhere.

As I read Illinois history of the prairie and the tall grasses I was reminded of how much this land meant to my parents and brother. My last memorable experience with my brother in 1985, a year before he died, was Ray taking an international friend from Sweden and I to a stand of tall prairie grass that had never been plowed. Ray spoke of the land in such a poetic way that it struck both my friend and I deeply. Ray cared about this land. My parents had as well. So did the rest of my relatives many of whom were farmers as well. I grew up with cousins who were also farm kids and, like the crops, we grew. Some cousins stayed in the area. Others left Illinois.

In 1996 I continued the contact with Rainer, the forester in Germany. By this time Rainer was aware that my uncle, Don Phillips, had been a POW in Germany in WWII and Rainer had read a brief piece Don wrote about his POW experience. Rainer wanted to translate it into German. Rainer sent pictures of the Mimbach Church and I sent his two children University of Oregon Duck t-shirts. Fair exchange I thought. Rainer made it quite clear to me that my Moschels ancestors never would have considered themselves Frenchies, even though the land went back and forth under various political organization through the years. We were planning a trip to Germany in summer 1997 if possible. Would we meet Rainer?

But first I walked down to the local pond, saw a heron and I was off and writing about Illinois history. Illinois, the place that saw significant changes over time with the people and how the land was used.

# Illinois River 1605

At the same time Hans the Elder was trying to make a baptismal gift for his new grandson, half way around the world people were living in a much different way than the Moschels in Germany. Eventually the Moschels would live in this area, but now Native Americans did. These people were the Illinek Indians who lived in an area yet unexplored by white people. Wind-in-the-Grass was a young maiden of this tribe. One day the land of the Illinek would become the land of the Moschels, but that was a long time away. Now the Illinek were the custodians of this grand land with its grasses, prairies, rivers, and natural landmarks. One of these landmarks was on the river and was later to be called Starved Rock.

Wind-in-the-Grass was walking along the river. She stopped and looked at the decaying log on the opposite bank which had fallen into the river probably sometime last winter because she did not remember it and she knew every piece of the river well. The log was near the bank's edge and a grey heron was perched, one footed, at the end of the decaying log that reached the furthest into the river. The heron appeared to watch her as she walked along the river bank. It stood still and unwavering. The heron seemed unconcerned about her presence and did not move as she moved toward it.

In the distance along the same side of bank as the log Wind-in-the-Grass could see the towering, broad cliff with the flat top. It had been a landmark forever for her people. But today in addition to the memorable cliff was the pleasure of seeing the stately heron. Perhaps she could take some time to sit and enjoy the heron and the towering cliff. She had worked all morning getting the land ready to plant corn. It was time to take a rest. Her work was done for the moment and the weather could not be more beautiful. There was light streaming among the new budding, and full-budded green leaves in the trees along the bank. Light was also glistening on the rocks in the river. The temperature was mild and warm.

Wind-in-the-Grass and her people had just traveled back to the river and she was ready, along with her tribe, to settle in for the summer. As was her practice the last several years after settling in, she would take part of a day and go to this spot in the river where she could see the cliff, pondering its magnificence, and enjoy the gentle movement of the river. Today was the day to do that. The heron added to the pleasure. First she looked at the heron and then looked at the cliff in the distance. It towered five times as high as was the river wide. Three sides of the cliff were straight down to the river and only a reckless brave would dare try and climb it on those sides. The fourth side could be ascended. On the top it was flat and the views from there were breathtaking of the grasses, river, and woods below and in the distance. Wind-in-the-Grass had often been told by her mother she thought of her name as she stood pregnant on the cliff ever so many seasons ago and watched the wind ripple gracefully through the tall grasses.

This past winter had not been too harsh for her tribe. They had gone south, packing all summer's prepared food with them, and had found enough game to supplement their winter diet. Ten suns ago they traveled back north ready to take up summer residence at The Great Village down a short walk on the river. They had already built their summer village homes and the women were preparing the fields for planting of corn, beans, and squash.

Wind-in-the-Grass relished the summers by the river. The work was hard and long, but the days were also long. This summer was her greatest summer yet as she knew life was growing in her. Before next winter's journey south she would have a child. Wind-in-the-Grass smiled as she thought of bringing her young to this river, maybe this year, at least by next. Wind-in-the-Grass had not told her news to anyone, in time all will know, but for now she enjoyed having it her own secret. Maybe she would tell the heron today. Yes, that is what she would do.

She looked out on the river toward the fallen log that was holding the heron, still standing on one foot, and she cupped her hands around her mouth and formed the words "life is within me" and whispered them toward the heron. The heron did not move or look at her. She took away her cupped hands and raised her voice and said the same message again. The heron turned toward her and Wind-in-the-Grass imagined the heron knowing her secret. Just then the heron took off from the log and flew over Wind-in-the-Grass in the direction of The Great Village. Its large wings spread over Wind-in-the-Grass and she started to run along the bank following the heron. In her hurry of looking up to follow the great bird, Wind-in-the-Grass brushed her arm along the huge oak tree and her seed bracelet, given to her by Lone Buffalo, scrapped along the tree and was loosened and went into the river. Wind-in-the-Grass did not notice the bracelet was gone. If she had, she would have been saddened; but these days few things saddened her as she anticipated the future and many years along the river.

Wind-in-the-Grass was a part of the Illinek tribe of Indians who lived in the valley of the Illinois River that went from the great lake to the NE (later called Lake Michigan) to the great river that went south (later called the Mississippi River). The Illinek had lived in these lands for many years and their settlement, which varied with the seasons, was quite established.

In the summer they lived on the Illinois River in the town of La Vantum, usually five thousand or more Indians lived there. Their way of living was well established in this town. Four or five families lived together in shelters that were constructed of bark on the roofs and walls and covered with buffalo skins. The women were responsible for raising the corn, drying it, and preparing it for transport during their winters south. The men hunted buffalo and other game which was in huge abundance along their rivers and prairies. They had fowl, small and large game, and of course the buffalo with which they coexisted. The numbers of buffalo matched the numbers in their large tribe.

The area in which they lived was dominated by tall and not so tall grasses, woodlands, and rivers that connected with one another and could take them far away. The buffalo lived on the grasses, and the Indians lived on the buffalo and other game. They traveled by the water routes

and fished the large carp and catfish in the rivers. They also traveled by the trails tramped down by the buffalo. They had not seen horses. Everything seemed connected to everything else. Seasons came. Seasons went. They knew what to do in each part of the year and they did it.

In the winters the peoples would travel south, carrying most of their provisions, and dig partially underground huts covered with thick woven mats, living the best they could through the snows of winters. Time was passed in winter hunting, eating their smoked and dried goods, and telling stories through the long nights over and over again. As spring came, they moved back north and lived in what they considered the prime areas of waterway travel networks.

Wind-in-the-Grass's tribe had never seen white people. That event was still a number of years off and Wind-in-the-Grass's child, whom she named Grey Heron, would be an old warrior of 67 summers when the French explorers Louis Jolliet and Father Pere Marquette first traveled down from Lake Michigan; portaged to the Illinois River and found La Vantum in September 1673 and converted the Illinek Indians to Christianity. Not Luther's Christianity but Roman Catholicism. In addition to Catholicism, Jolliet took possession of the country in the name of Louis IV.

It is interesting to note when Hans the Younger was magistrate at Mimbach (1665-1682), the first explorations by white people were being made in Illinois Country. Louis Jolliet said in his journal at the time, "No better soil can be found, either for corn, for vines, or for any other fruit whatever;" To him the region appeared "to be the most beautiful and most easily settled." Father Marquette added to this sentiment in his journal by stating, "we have seen nothing like this river (the Illinois) that we enter, as regards its fertility of soil, its prairies and woods." Both men knew that settlers would have a relatively easy time of using the land soon upon arrival rather than working 10 years or more clearing the land. As Jolliet said, "There are prairies three, six, ten or twenty leagues in length, and three in width surrounded by forests of the same extent; beyond these the prairies begin again, so that there is as much of one sort of land as the other. Sometimes we saw grass very short, and, at other times, five or six feet high."

In 1678 another French traveler, Father Hennepin commented on the Illinois valley in this way, "We are convinced that the soil is capable of producing all kinds of fruit, herbs and grain, and in greater abundance than the best lands in Europe." Hennepin returned to France and his words as well as the words of Jolliet and Marquette were published and filtered throughout Europe as time passed.

It was clear that the life of Grey Heron and his people would change forever. So, eventually, would the lives of the descendants of Hans the Younger. Hans' descendants would move to the land of Grey Heron. Grey Heron's people would be removed from the area.

# Oregon/Germany 1997

Before we went to Germany I wanted to know as much about the times of my great, great grandparents as possible. In December 1996 I finished a 900-page history of 19th century German history. I had contacted a friend who was a history professor specializing in these times in Germany, took his suggestions for reading, and had audited his classes on German history years before at the University of Oregon.

I started writing about Germany 1856 in January 1997. Another Oregon winter focused the mind. Rainer in Germany emailed about the Mimbach Hotel we might consider if we wanted to come to Germany. By this time he was an email pen pal. In April Rainer reserved the hotel for us. May 29, 1997, we were airborne and spending time in England, our favorite locale, prior going to the Continent. We stayed first with friends in Brussels, one of whom was the visitor who saw the tall prairie with my brother and I in 1985, and got our rental car out of Brussels with only one mistake. We were through Belgium and Luxembourg and dipped down into France and on to Germany and to Bliskastel (the city which now incorporated both Webenheim and Mimbach). We got German marks and then drove the mile plus to Mimbach. It was very hot and muggy on that June 16th day. We walked to the Mimbach church and found a woman who had a key to the church and found a stone at the church from 1609. The church was much bigger than I thought and impressive as we walked up and down the aisle. I thought of the writing I had just completed about Hans being in this church and its importance to him and his family.

We walked the mile over to Webenheim and found houses built in 1830 and the church built in 1867, which would have been after my great grandmother Moschel left. The next day we trekked to Oberweissen, the place where my Klein German relatives had emigrated. Rain was ever present, but we had some genealogy success and it certainly was a lovely little village, even in the rain. On the way home we stopped in Webenheim to meet a private archivist I had written and found out his house had been built by a Moschel in 1764. It was here we learned that there are not old grave yards as there are way too many people. To put it kindly, recycling of grave sites had to happen. We tried to get as much of a photo essay of both Webenheim and Mimbach as we could, including the war memorial in Webenheim and pictures of grave stones which did include Moschels. I was disappointed I could find no t-shirts or postcards with either Mimbach or Webenheim on them. The town had now been incorporated into the Bliskastel area, even though the individual identity was important to each village.

The evening ended with meeting Rainer for dinner and a 2-hour discussion and learning the history of the area from his point of view. Rainer turned out to be as delightful, informative, and funny as his emails. Jack and I totally agreed that we had a great experience in Saarland, albeit it very short.

# Mimbach to Webenheim, 1738

About two hundred and fifty years passed in the life of the Moschel family of Mimbach. History records if a person traveled from 16th century Germany to 1800 there would have been noticeable change in German politics but the social and economic order would have been recognizable. The people still traveled along bad roads, both on foot and on horses. The houses were heated with wood and lit by candle. The soil was fertilized by animal wastes and the housing was built by the same methods. Village life was much the same, meaning going with the rhythm dictated by the church bells and flowing with the seasons of nature. Imperial states had fallen, but people continued to earn their bread in much the same fashion as they did in the times of Luther.

Remembering our Mimbach family, Hans Moschel the younger did grow up to be a magistrate in Mimbach and fathered a son named Daniel born December 28, 1651, who died December 20, 1719, in Mimbach. This Daniel also fathered a son named Daniel born February 26, 1690, who died July 19, 1742, in Mimbach.

The next generation of Moschels made a move, not a big one, but perhaps for the times a major one. The Moschels moved from Mimbach to Webenheim, about a mile away. The first Moschel in Webenheim was Nickel who was born October 18, 1711, in Mimbach and died February 29, 1782, in Webenheim. Nickel was a master shoemaker and he moved from Mimbach to Webenheim in 1738 most likely so he could practice his trade of shoemaker as a master. It is easy to speculate he was trained in Mimbach as an apprentice and moved away from his own master to have a shop of his own. For whatever reason, this branch of the Moschels began to call Webenheim their home.

Nickel's son was Peter, born December 14, 1738, (coinciding with the year of his father's move to Webenheim). Peter died January 25, 1794, in Webenheim. Peter had a son named Georg born July 2, 1771, who died in 1852. Georg continued his residence in Webenheim.

And now we come down to our current story. Georg had a son named Christian who was born on October 5, 1800, and it is with this man and his family we continue our story of the Moschels. To summarize the Moschels as we know them:

Hans (born circa 1530 in Mimbach) who was our first storyteller

Daniel (born circa 1565 in Mimbach)

Hans (born circa 1605 in Mimbach)

Daniel (born December 28, 1651 in Mimbach)

Daniel (born February 26, 1690 in Mimbach)

Nickel (born October 18, 1711 in Mimbach and moved to Webenheim)

Peter (born December 14, 1738 in Webenheim)

Georg (born July 2, 1771 in Webenheim)

Christian (born October 5, 1800 in Webenheim) Christian married twice. His second wife was Margaret Schantz Moschel, my great, great grandmother, who emigrated to the U.S. Margaret is our next story teller. Her husband, Christian, died in 1856.

# Webenheim, Germany 1856

Margaret wanted to get up early on this particular day. She was not sleeping and had not been for several nights, actually weeks, so she might as well get up early. It had been one month. One month since Christian died. It seemed like yesterday, and it seemed months ago. How could she feel both ways about one event--the same event, her husband's death. Her husband's death....the words lingered in her mind, swirling around endlessly like they had since his death. In many ways she had little time to think because life had to go on for she and her six children and two step children. Eating, working, sleeping, children going to school, cleaning, tending to animals, closing down Christian's business...all these things had to occur daily.

Thud...a small kick seemed to be inside her belly. Was it too soon? Margaret knew the feeling well after eight children and wondered if Christian's last child would make it here before full summer arrived. She guessed yes, and she knew how to predict these things pretty well by now. Christian could not help with this delivery and step daughter Louisa was let out as a servant and young Margaret was only 14, but perhaps that was old enough. Ah, there goes the mind again, thought Margaret, wandering, wandering, worrying, worrying. Never stopping. Never calm except when she was head first into a task, which, thankfully, was very often.

Today, though, Margaret wanted to get up early and look at Christian's journal. She had not done so since Christian's death and today, one month since he left this earth, seemed like a good time to do so. She got out of bed with some difficulty with swollen feet and walked around to Christian's side of the bed...she still only slept on her half...and reached underneath the bed and pulled out the bound journal. It was a elegant book with a green cover and superb binding. It had been given to Christian by his father Georg in 1813 when Christian went off to be a cabinetmaker apprentice. There was an inscription on the inside cover, *To Christian...may your work life do you well, your father.*

So far in this early morning hour Margaret was doing everything by feel in this dark day of winter. It was cold, damp, and pitch black. By instinct she lit the candle by the bed and looked at the inscription in the light glow produced by the candle. Margaret knew her husband had highly valued the gift from his father, Georg. His father knew he was a writer and recorder and would find the book a companion in his life's work. And he did. He wrote in the journal from his 13th year until two days before his death recording his life as a worker, father, and husband.

Margaret turned the page in the journal...in big letters the year **1813** was imprinted on the first page. It seemed strange to think of her husband starting his work life the same year she started life. Christian was a beginning apprentice and she was the newest child in the Schantz household in Webenheim the same year.

She looked down at the first entry. *I fear writing the first words in this journal. The pages are so neat, the binding so perfect, how can my thoughts match the elegance of this book.* How like Christian, concerned that his thoughts would not match up to some perfection he had in mind, even at the tender age

of 13. It was how he felt about all his creations, whether it be a piece of furniture or his children. The work was never good enough. He was never good enough even though he tried with all his might.

Skipping over the first few pages of the journal, Margaret knew she was thumbing over the first days of her husband's work life as an apprentice in Webenheim under the Master he called Mr. Schwartz. Master Schwartz had several apprentices in his shop and for these first days of the journal Christian was the newest and youngest man in the shop. One of his earlier entries stated, *One month's test necessary work before Master Schwartz will let me be bound to him. I must show him I can do it.*

Margaret thought of the number of apprentices Christian had employed the last fourteen years of their married life and each time he would say to her, "I will never treat them as Master Schwartz treated me. Mark my words." Margaret never quite knew what that meant, but Christian always went out of his way to be fair and kind to the young workers starting in the craft.

*Still have to start the fires and sweep the shop in addition to all the rest of my duties.* Ah, the trials of the youngest worker. Christian made his youngest workers do the same. Everyone liked a new apprentice to come to the shop because the duties would be rotated and each round up you got a better choice of what you wanted to do.

*Embarrassed again. When will I learn. Today I was sent to get a dozen keyholes from the ironmonger. Everyone was laughing when I returned.* Christian was shy, painfully shy, and jokes like this had always been difficult for him. He did not know how to be a jokester and didn't like to make others the butt of jokes. Margaret thought she had heard every one of the early pranks against him. His plane glued to the bench. The time he was asked to go get a drop of strap-oil (and received a leather strap on his behind instead). The time they exchanged wine for fruit juice during his meal break. They were childish things you could say, but Master Schwartz did not stop them and in fact encouraged them to toughen in his new apprentices. His time there could not go swiftly enough, but he learned his trade.

Still in the year of 1813 Margaret noted another entry. *The holdfast rang twice today. The first time Hans had to apologize to all of us and provide drink after work, the second Peter had to take over my duties of sweeping up the shop at the end of the day.* Justice in the shop. Christian explained it to Margaret many times and in reality she used a version of that with her own children. The rule in the shop was that any time a man had a grievance with another they could immediately hold court in the shop and settle the matter. The person who wanted to state his grievance would simply strike his iron holdfast on the top of his workbench with a hammer. The sound would echo throughout the shop and the men would stop work and go to where the sound came from. Before hearing the grievance the men would choose a judge by show of hands and then the striker would present his case; others would comment; and the judge would judge.

Margaret turned many pages and found herself in 1819 in the journal. *A wonderful send off today. I am both frightened and filled with opportunity in going to Blieskastel.* This had to be the day Christian had looked forward to for six years in Master Schwartz' shop. His life as an apprentice

was over and he was a journeyman. Master Schwartz threw a party for his now not-so-young apprentice. Christian talked about the years in Blieskastel fondly to Margaret. He was young. He had few responsibilities. He was away from his family and Master Schwartz. Life was good.

It was hard for Margaret to think of Christian as a young man. She wondered what he was like. The man she married was already well established in his craft and his way of life and carried many responsibilities. He must have been very different in Blieskastel. A carefree Christian...would that have been possible, mused Margaret on this dark, cold morning. No, she thought, maybe not, since a journeyman's life is well regulated by the masters.

The molding of this cabinetmaker took place in Blieskastel, of this Margaret was certain. When she first met Christian, he was already a master cabinetmaker in Webenheim, but this did not happen magically. He had worked hard in his journeyman jobs, working under several masters, and then he came "home" to Webenheim and applied to his Guild. Margaret hunted for the entry she was now seeking and found it in July, 1825. *I am a Guild member. I thought it would never happen. Life will be different now. Father is proud of me. I know it.*

Margaret had not known Christian as a nonguild member. The Cabinetmaker Guild had its place she guessed; it protected them and spread out the work, but...she didn't even know how she wanted to end that thought. Petty, perhaps. The Carpenter Guild making it impossible for cabinetmakers to use iron nails was an example of what she thought Guilds came down to in the end. They protected, but at what price.

Margaret was accusing the Guild of being petty, but perhaps now she was being petty as well, because she, too, had turned to Guild in the last month and the months building up to Christian's death. The Guild was like family since her marriage to Christian. She both loved and hated that. She valued the protection, but detested that the Guild had separated her from her own family in all matters that were important to her now. Perhaps she could count on the Guild for a while, but for how long. She knew, also, that the Guild would want her oldest son, Louis, in a short time. He was 11, but in less than two years he could be an apprentice. And it starts all over again thought Margaret.

Birth. Apprentice. Journeyman. Entry to the Guild. Master. Die.

Margaret began skipping more pages in search of the entries that started a new life for Christian and found it in October 1825. *My shop, my very own shop! It is a time I thought would never come. My father is pleased and I will pay him back soon. It is a small shop but it will grow and I will grow with it.*

Reading this entry Margaret could feel how proud Christian was of himself. He had successfully completed his apprenticeship and journeyman days, applied to the Guild and been accepted, and now the fruits of all his labor had ended in achieving his goal of having his own shop. This shop Margaret remembered well. She was 12 at the time. Her family used his shop, even though it was off the main street, and that is how she first met the young cabinetmaker. Her parents had known Christian prior to his journeyman era and were more than willing to try this new cabinetmaker for their furniture needs.

*My first piece in my shop finished today. It is a oak side table and I charged a fair price and was paid when I delivered it with my cart. I shall celebrate tonight.* Margaret wondered what Christian did on that evening so many years ago. Perhaps he already knew Louisa and celebrated with her.

Margaret skipped many pages in the journal. She knew she would read them sometime, but not now. Christian's life with Louisa had always been a fact of her life it seemed. Perhaps she was jealous of the days when Christian was young and energized and hopeful and that those days were shared with someone else, not her. Whatever, now was not the time she was going to think about that.

A cry was echoing down the hall and disturbed her reverie. It was Daniel. The winter had been so cold and he had been sick for much of his second winter. Margaret started to put down the journal to tend to her youngest child and then she heard young Margaret already up. She knew Daniel would be cared for well. Margaret had essentially turned Daniel over to her daughter Margaret this winter. Christian's illness, Daniel's illness, the daily chores of the house, Christian's death....it had been an awful winter. She never would have made it without her oldest daughter Margaret. Never.

Was it time to get up for good and start this day? Just a few moments more Margaret thought. She wanted just a few moments more to live in the past. Not face the present, let alone the future. Margaret did not know what to do with the future.

Margaret kept turning the pages until she found the day in 1838 she sought. *Today starts a new life. A new wife. I am happy, very happy. I know my children are as happy as they have been for a while. It will be a good life. I will work to make Margaret happy and be worthy of her.* There it was, her wedding day. Margaret closed her eyes, breathed a deep breath, and she could see her parents and family traveling together and bringing her to the wedding ceremony. She was 24 and marrying a widower with two children ages 5 and 3. Her life would never be the same again. It was so long ago and she hardly knew the Margaret who came to that wedding feast and became a hausfrau of Christian Moschel on that day, now over eighteen years ago.

Eighteen years ago. Unbelievable. She knew if she looked carefully through the journal she would find every page where each of her children were born. Christian had been in attendance for each birth and marked them not only in the family bible but in this journal as well. Eight children, one dying, and the ninth on the way. She had been a good hausfrau for her children and stepchildren. Christian had been a good father; provided well; and left them as well as he could. But now that is all over. The children are here and there is no Christian. Margaret knew she must do on her own.

Panic began to set in as it had on other mornings when she took the liberty to think before she got up. Usually some child was up, depending on whose duty it was to start the fire, and she could stop her thoughts of wondering what would happen tomorrow and the day after tomorrow and the many tomorrows that were to come with so many mouths to feed and bodies to clothe and minds to teach.

Margaret knew she had to start thinking about this. She had successfully put it out of her mind for over a month. She told herself she had to get up and face THIS day. Margaret lingered on two more pages.

The first page was in written in late 1853. *Received the first letter from John today. They have arrived in Illinois and are doing well. He advises me to come.* Margaret remembered this day well. Christian was still feeling well and was overjoyed at hearing from his brother in America and Margaret could tell he wanted to join his brother in this new land.

Margaret then forced herself to look at the last page written on January 1, 1856. *I am very weak. The new year starts and I wonder if I will see it through.*

Margaret closed the journal and put it back underneath the bed. She got up. There was a new day to face. Young Margaret had Daniel in her arms consoling him. She could hear Louis stirring and she knew Frederick would follow his older brother and Charles would dawdle a bit behind his older brothers. Margaret would start her day by helping Catherine dress. Yes, that would start this day and then it will flow from there.

Margaret Schantz Moschel's life was in great turmoil. She was a woman of 42 years of age, just widowed, who had seven living children ages 14, 12,10, 9, 6, 4, almost 2, and was in the early stages of pregnancy with a ninth child. She was also the step mother of two older children from her husband's first marriage. Her current prospects ranged from dismal to dim. As contrasted to when her husband became a widower and took a younger wife to care for his two children, there would be no man who would want to take on the responsibility of she and her seven children. So personally, these were crisis times for this Moschel family.

In addition, the larger scene around this family was also filled with change, drama, and rapid evolution. Christian Moschel lived from 1800-1856, most of the time in Webenheim with apprenticeship experiences in nearby Bavarian areas. We shall never know how much Christian felt the tides of change, but the land where he lived went through as many changes as Margaret was destined to make after Christian's death.

Christian's early youth dovetailed with the era of Napoleon and the Napoleonic Wars. In Napoleon's quest to carry the ideals of the French Revolution throughout Europe, he conquered many lands. The area nearest France, where the Moschels lived, caught the revolutionary spirit early on. The military occupation came, and where Christian lived was under French rule from 1792-1814. Some good came from this, such as the Napoleon Code and buying church lands very cheap. For the Moschel family the biggest impact might have been the lost privileges of the Guilds as well as losing potential markets and also hating the occupying French troops on their land.

As young Christian started his apprenticeship years, The Congress of Vienna convened (1815-16) after the defeat of Napoleon at Waterloo and essentially the Congress gave back all the lands to the original countries and reinstated privileges taken away by Napoleon. The result was probably two-fold for Christian: he was not needed as a war machine, and peace generally

reigned in his geographical area and throughout Europe for the next 30 years making it easier to establish a family and means of living.

The so-called German lands made a similar transition in these times from the 240 states of the Holy Roman Empire (prior to Napoleon) to the Germanic confederation of 39 states in 1819. Webenheim was in the state of Bavaria. Because of the changes in politics on the big stage, it is likely that the Moschels felt first allegiance to family, then Webenheim, then Bavaria, and a very distant fourth to the Germanic Confederation of 39 states.

The 30-plus years of peace in Europe after The Congress of Vienna was shattered in 1848 when economic and social unrest turned to revolt in most of central Europe. The unrest was mainly urban and peopled by peasant workers who were fighting the repressive bureaucracies. There were several causes of the revolts, but, in short, too many workers (overpopulation) could not be a part of the industrial growth and destitution was the result for many.

Could it have been this year or the year after (1849) when the revolution was thwarted that John and Christian Moschel, middle-age brothers with many family responsibilities, decided that emigration to America sounded better than what they had in Bavaria? Perhaps America was sought "less to build something new than to regain and conserve something old." John made it to America in 1853 with his wife and five children and lived in or near Washburn, Illinois, near Peoria. His brother Christian, husband of Margaret, died before he could emigrate.

The means for emigrating were enhanced by the building of railroads. In many ways the expansion of the railroads represented the changes in Europe in the 19th century. The continent went from wall fortifications around cities to protect the citizens and keep others out; to the time when train stations were in the center of the cities connecting people from one place to another. An astounding change.

The first railroad in Germany was 1836, albeit a short one, but by 1852 a railroad went from Saarbrücken (near Webenheim) to Paris where there were connections to LeHavre at the coast to obtain a ship crossing to America. In all likelihood it is this route that John Moschel and his family used to leave Webenheim to eventually reach Illinois in the 1850s.

None of the Moschels from this branch of the family stayed in Webenheim, Bavaria, long enough to see a united Germany which occurred in 1871 under Bismarck after more confederations, more wars, and in the words of Bismarck "blood and iron," showing his contempt for the policy route of settling questions.

Our Moschels were not going to stay in Bavaria. They were going to America. Margaret, widow of Christian the cabinetmaker, with her two step children and seven sons and daughters of Christian were to leave the old world for the new. The winds of change were in the air for Margaret and her stepchildren and her oldest daughter Margaret and Louis and Frederick and Charles and Catherine and Jacob and Daniel. The child Margaret was carrying at the time of her husband's death was born July 22, 1856. He was named Christian, but died on February 5, 1857.

# Oregon 2000

After the trip to Germany in June 1997 the story of the German relatives was put on the back burner for 3 years. Lots of other things were occupying my mind and time and the grandiose idea of writing a story about German relatives from 1500's to current time seemed much too time consuming. I had discovered, which I knew would be the case, a lot of research had to occur to be able to write even one paragraph. How did historical fiction writers do it? How did James Michener write all those stories of epic scale of several generations? I wanted a research staff. Thus, smaller genealogy projects occurred which were deemed doable in short time frames. Paid work had some tough deadlines also and had to come first. The 20th century ended with getting the first version of our ThinkPint website up and live in April 1999. (There were just two of us, and thus we were not big enough for a ThinkTank, thus we were a Pint.) And as the century ended, computers failed none of us on December 31, 1999, as many feared.

The year 2000 came, new computers came, as they seemed to do regularly in our household, as my husband had been a very early adopter of computers and wanted to always be ahead of the game. Each new computer necessitated the learning curve start all over again. We expanded what we would put on our personal website and decided it was fair game to put family genealogy stories there. So be it, it was our website.

The closest we came to Germany was my husband's vision of getting a BMW, a lifelong dream, which he realized in August 2000. Then in September 2000 the latest website went live with the genealogy stories, and we began to think of trips that could be taken with this new fine German automobile. Earlier we had Probed America with a Ford Probe in 1992, emailing friends every night of the trip with our laptop and modem connection, not always easy to find then. I told Jack he definitely had to see Chenoa, Illinois, my hometown for a Fourth of July. No small town did it better I declared. We Probed America and made the Chenoa Fourth in 1992.

We began thinking about Beaming America with a BMW in 2001. Yes, that seemed good to do, and that would be a different way to visit Illinois. I thought, let's see, great great grandmother Margaret Schantz Moschel went to Illinois first, but wasn't she buried in Beatrice, Nebraska. Certainly a cross-country trip could move in that direction if it occurred. I retrieved a Rt. 66 canvas notebook which I had been saving for something special and we started planning a trip on Streets and Trips on the computer. What fun. The first night we could make it to from Eugene to Caldwell, Idaho; night two could be Eden, Utah; night 3 could be Lander, Wyoming; night four Scottsbluff, Nebraska; night five Hastings, Nebraska; night six would be Beatrice. Yes, that would all be possible and then two more days to Chenoa, Illinois.

Those thoughts were mulling around as I began to revisit history of my hometown Chenoa and how it started in 1854.

# Chenowa Station, Illinois, 1854

Times were changing on the Illinois prairie. Illinois was a state and the northern part of the state, including Chicago, were being settled fast. This area included the place where the former Illinek Indians lived in the 1600's. The area's biggest town was Peoria. But further down the state, settlements were just emerging. One of these areas was Chenowa, which eventually would be another area important to the Moschel family. The names below are all real people, except for the first, Michael Cleary. Michael represents the many immigrants who built railroads and changed the face of America.

Michael Cleary was cold, wet, tired, and hungry. He was going to be relieved soon by one of his Irish mates and could go back to Bloomington to a decent meal and a warm room. He could hear the whistle of the train at the station in Pontiac. It would not be long now.

It was at times like these that Michael wondered why he ever left Ireland. The winters are so severe here and seem to start in October and go straight through until April.

"Mom and Dad, are you laughing at me for doing the crossing?" He mused.

Michael often talked out loud to himself as he worked. There was no one to hear on this desolate prairie so he might as well have some company, and having his parents and brothers and sisters along in this small half sod, half board dugout which served as a depot, freight house, and home for the railroad section hands was better than no company at all. It passed the time. And time was long when the days were short, but the work was there in the cold, dark days of winter.

Michael had been in Illinois for two years helping to build part of the railroad and now serving one of the stations on the line from Alton to Chicago. He had lived at many of the stations as they were built 10 miles apart and this was one of the latest. He wondered if this place would blossom as he saw many of the other places do as soon as the railway came.

Why not. This place looked as good as the rest as far as the land and soil. None would compare to his beloved homeland, of course, but this rich prairie sod was dark and deep. When Michael had the chance to ride the iron horse through the prairies and not stoke the broiler he looked out on a feast to behold. The grasses were long and coarse and as tall as a man. The grasses swayed with the winds and went on for miles and miles and miles on both sides of the railways. It was flat, flat, flat as far as you could see.

Michael had the opportunity to ride both the Illinois Central railway from Centralia to Bloomington and the Chicago and Alton from Alton to its station in Pontiac. He was sure by the end of this year or perhaps into next they would have built the entire way to Chicago.

Michael wondered how this station got its name. Chenowa, or was it Chenoa, both were on the station sign, seemed foreign to him. Probably Indian he thought, but it did not sound like any

Kickapoo word he knew. The Kickapoo had been moved from here by the government in 1832 just like the Illinec had been removed further north. Old timers had lots of tales about the Indians and Indian words were used to name lots of creeks and streams.

Thinking of the Kickapoo made him think of spring and how last spring he found so many arrowheads when he was working on building the line. He hoped he would again this year. It would be a collection he could give his kids some day, if he ever had kids. Ah, spring, when would it be here. It was only February and many long days ahead until spring.

The whistle was stronger. In a few minutes he would be picked up and then back to Bloomington. A few days away from this dugout would be fine with him. Some time to warm up, stay in a larger station, and have some conversation with his friends. The next few days looked better than this cold day on the prairie.

The railroads changed Illinois perhaps more than anything else before and since. By the end of 1855 Illinois had 2005 miles of track, more than any other western state. The first few miles of track were laid around Chicago in 1851 and by 1857 Chicago had a dozen truck lines feeding into the burgeoning city on the lake.

By the end of 1855 railroads crisscrossed the large state. Several lines went east and west and one major line almost cut the state in half north and south. It was called the Illinois Central. Then there was one line that went on a diagonal from Alton (near St. Louis) to Chicago. This railway was started by an Alton merchantman who wanted to usurp commercial trade away from St. Louis. He received his railway charter in 1847 and after getting more capital built his railroad in a relatively straight diagonal line from Alton to Chicago locating stations every 10 miles to allow for a new prairie town at each station.

One of these towns was Chenowa.

In 1852 a young 24-year-old, Matthew Scott of Kentucky, bought several thousand acres of Illinois prairie for himself, family, and friends. There were huge land sales of Illinois prairie between 1849-1855 for the going rate of \$1.25 an acre. Mr. Scott bought where he knew the railroad would go and he did that around the place he wanted to call Chenowa. He chose the name Chenowa because it was the Indian word for Kentucky where he grew up. The deed recorder spelled it Chenoa and somehow it never got changed.

In 1854 there was nothing in Chenoa but the sod house of the railroad workers. But Matthew Scott had plans. He knew other railroad towns, like Decatur, went from zero settlers to 3000 in less than five years. He believed the same could happen to Chenoa and was ready to plan for it and laid out blocks, streets, and lots for a new town.

Scott was certain he could not lose. He could resell the land and probably double his profit in a couple of years. He would build a name and town and all before he was 30.

By the following year the first store came to Chenoa to serve the area farmers who were coming and were sure to come in larger numbers. The store, simply called the Farmer's Store,

was run by J.B. Lenney. It was one block from the Chicago and Alton Railroad depot. The store served as a residence for Lenney, a cabinet shop, and a supply store. Lenney drove to Peoria to get his supplies those first few months and at that time he would not see another person or plowed furrow until he reached Washington in Tazewell County.

Having no residents south of Washington County and Peoria was all to change in a very short period of time. Margaret Schantz Moschel would live to own land in and near Chenoa, even though she had never heard of it as she was grieving her husband's death in 1856. First Margaret would travel to Peoria (70 miles NW of Chenoa) where the ancestors of Grey Heron and the entire Illinek tribe had been moved to make room for the onslaught of the white settlers from Europe and the East Coast.

One hundred years later, in 1954, Margaret Schantz Moschel's great, great granddaughter, Theresa Margaret, would ride the in Centennial Parade of Chenoa as a 10-year-old wearing the wedding blouse of her Irish grandmother on a very hot summer's day. The 10-year-old had no idea her roots in this land were so long. How could she? Nor did she understand that she was the namesake of Margaret Schantz Moschel of Webenheim. All the little girl knew was that her name was Theresa Margaret. It would take decades for her to appreciate her middle name and the woman who was christened with this name in 1813 in Webenheim, Germany.

# Early 2001

The year 2001 started out well. We took the Beamer to Arizona for a little trip to see Aunt Sally Phillips, Don's widow. We were warming up the German auto for longer trips, but this trip to Phoenix and then Tucson was a good start.

As far as genealogy, short pieces honoring ancestors' birthdays and sending them to family seemed manageable with other obligations. Then on March 4, 2001, when we were ready to take a 2-day trip to the Oregon Coast, I received an email. Before reading imagine you had been twice to Webenheim, Germany, once not knowing too much and a second time making a concerted effort to find Moschels, albeit dead ones. Imagine further it was 150 years since your great grandmother, for whom you were named, had left Webenheim and that you did not know you had any living relatives left in this small village. As long as you are imagining, think you had written about Hans Moschel in the 1500's and about the move of the Moschels from Mimbach a mile away to Webenheim. With that perspective read this, not once, but twice.

*Hello Mrs Theresa Ripley!*

*I'm Markus Klein from Webenheim. I'm studying my family trees too and some of my forefathers are the same with yours! Caroline Moschel (daughter of Philip Moschel and Luise Gölzer) was my ur-ur-ur grandma! So I know the Moschel genealogy until Johann Nickel Moschel, the first Moschel in Webenheim, and now it's getting interesting!! I have the "kirchenbuch" of Webenheim-Mimbach and there is written that the marriage with SCHUNK Susanna Margaretha was his second marriage! She was from Webenheim and was a widow (was married with Simon Hamm, a weaver and they had already 6 children). Johann Nickel Moschel was a widower, too. His died wife was the daughter of the "pfarrer" (parson, minister??) of Mimbach Christian Wernigk. She died one year before his second marriage with Mrs. Schunk. Her name was Maria Luisa and she was only 27 years old. Probably she died because of the birth of her first child Susanna (\*16.2.1737+29.4.1738), only 8 days later she was dead!! So, probably he moved to Webenheim because of his second marriage and he wanted to begin a new step in life with another person who was alone too and remember that both persons had already children. Johann Nickel had one girl from his dead wife and Susanna Schunck had 6 children from her dead man Simon Hamm. Unfortunately, Johann Nickels daughter died only 2 month after his second marriage, what a tragedy!*

*Dear Mrs. Ripley this was the reason why the Moschels came to Webenheim.*

*I would be happy to hear about you via e-mail. Maybe we can learn about our ancestors.*

*With greetings from Webenheim,*

*Markus Klein*

My day was made. Not only could he write English well, but he could understand genealogy and tried to have the fun of guessing why people did what they did. I did not know then that Markus was 28 years old and that we would go on in this project and another project about WWII from the perspective of both families' point of view. No, that was far off. For now, for me,

my interest in my German ancestry was rekindled, big time. I had living Moschels in Webenheim. Hallelujah.

By March 13, 2001, I was reviewing my 'put it away for sometime' German Moschel story project and noted it was 'interesting,' even though there had been a 3-year hiatus in looking at the material. By March 26 I was starting a list, I always start with a list, of the next things to do and by April 3 I was outlining the continuing story on paper. By this time I had enlisted the efforts of Greg Rittenhouse, my first cousin in L.A., the ace researcher who had researched the Moschel line a great deal and also Elly Hess in San Carlos, California, the owner of the furniture piece we thought came from Germany which started my story telling venture in 1995. We were ready to start anew with Markus on the team.

Both Elly and Greg redoubled their research efforts and Elly continued in role of lead cheerleader. Markus added research information from his post in Webenheim and kept us on the edge of our seats as the story unfolded. Thus, the story started in my mind several years prior was changing almost daily as new "old" facts were discovered. I took responsibility for being scribe for the group and writing the mix of fact and fiction as it continued.

The next part of the story was to take place in 1862. The four geographical areas involved were: Peoria, Illinois, area; Chenoa, Illinois; Beatrice, Nebraska Territory; and Webenheim, Bavaria, Germany. The story was to view the Moschel families in two locations and two additional locations where the Moschels would live in the future in the U.S.

In 1862 the U.S. was embroiled in the Civil War between the North and the South lead by President Abraham Lincoln and his generals. Relatives in Germany continued to live during a period of discord. The German Confederation was disbanded in 1866; North German states banded together with Prussia in 1867; and the South German states were closely bound to the North by membership in the Zollverein, which was a customs union to eliminate tariff barriers. Wars occurred in 1866 in Austria and the Franco-Prussian War in 1870. The German Empire was founded in 1871 following the defeat of France by the Prussians. Wilhelm I became Kaiser and Bismarck was Chancellor and Prince. Thus, conflict abounded on both sides of the Atlantic.

The Moschel story was to take place in four places; two in the state of Illinois (a state since 1818); one in the territory of Nebraska (made a state in 1867); and one in Bavaria, one of the South German states. Could we pull this off as a team thousands of miles apart and in one case many time zones away? I did not know, but we were going to try.

# Illinois 1862

In 1738 Nickel Moschel moved from Mimbach, Germany, to Webenheim, Germany a distance of one mile. The next major geographical relocation for many of the Moschels was several thousand miles to the “new world”. Between 1849 and 1894 approximately 40 Moschel relatives traveled to the United States with the largest groups emigrating in the years 1853, 1861, and 1862. Margaret Schantz Moschel’s brother-in-law, John Moschel, came with his wife and family and his two sisters Charlotte and Elizabeth and brother Frederick and Margaret’s step son in 1853. In 1861 Margaret’s oldest son, Louis, came with his uncle Nickolaus Moschel and the latter’s wife and children. Now in 1862 it was Margaret’s turn to come with her remaining children, minus her youngest daughter.

Margaret Schantz Moschel, was widowed in Germany in 1856. Margaret moved almost halfway around the world to start a new life at age 49, casting her lot forever with her Moschel relatives and leaving her Schantz heritage in Germany. Various members of the Moschel family lived around Peoria, Illinois, in four small towns, each influenced by German immigration. In 1856 there were 1445 Germans estimated to be in Peoria, and obviously more if you counted the surrounding small towns where the Moschels lived in as well.

Most of the Moschels became farmers near Peoria but a shopkeeper or two was not unknown. By 1862 most of the Moschels who were emigrating from Webenheim had done so. The trip that started on a railroad in Saarbrucken ended on a steamer in Peoria. Many of the Moschels who disembarked the steamer in the 1860's were greeted by other Moschels who had emigrated in the 1850's. The new world thus touched the old world in the joy of families being reunited in a new life. A life they would build together, helping each other through many difficult times in this strange new world.

Many Moschels would eventually settle in the small town of Chenoa, Illinois, in the 1870's. Chenoa was established in 1854 as one of the stations of the Illinois Central railway from Alton to Chicago. The Chenoa area was to become a major player in being a part of the huge corn belt tying together the prairie plains. Low prices for grain between 1857 and 1862 caused the land developers to pause in their original plans. By the early 1860's Matthew Scott, the prime developer of early Chenoa, had improved 5000 acres of land in Chenoa township. He hired sod busters to break prairie for \$2.25 to \$3 per acre. In 1862 Scott's improved land brought \$20 an acre.

Even though a town recognized as such was not established until 1864, a Chenoa post office existed by 1856. In 1861 the population of Chenoa was 552 with 103 homes. The population burgeoned after the Civil War to 2000 people, which is when much of the German immigration occurred.

Chenoa, as the rest of the nation, was embroiled in the Civil War in 1862. The population of the entire state of Illinois was 1,700,000 in 1860, twice as many as ten years before, and from that

total 259,092 men were in the army and navy of the Civil War. The very small town of Chenoa had 50 to 60 enlistments. Some of these were in the 33rd regiment originally started at Illinois State Normal School near Bloomington. It was called the Teacher's Regiment. Other local regiments included the 94th Illinois infantry.

We rejoin Margaret, the widow from Webenheim as she starts her new life in Illinois in 1862.

It was a hot, humid July 14th near Pekin, Illinois. Big, black, bold clouds were building from the West. It appeared a major thunderstorm would appear soon. Margaret hated these thunderstorms, but they were much like the storms in Webenheim, at least one thing the same as home. The storms were so intense and the lightening streaking through the darkened skies in odd and haunting shapes scared her half to death, even if they rarely hit the ground. She hoped the men working in the fields would get away from their metal equipment and come to the house for a break from the storm. She knew that may or may not happen.

She decided the best way to direct her attention was to write her relatives in the area. This afternoon would be a good time to do it. She needed to start today considering how long it took mail to get to the post office and picked up by the intended recipient. Understanding mail and how to use it was just one of the many things Margaret had learned in the last month.

Margaret was organizing a gathering, a celebration of sorts. She needed to inform and get the cooperation of her relatives who lived nearby. She was writing to invite them to come on Sunday, August 24. This day the Moschels now living in America would come together to celebrate the latest arrivals from Germany. Margaret was aware the gathering had a bigger purpose and that was to keep family together. When they all lived in Webenheim, it was easy to get together and know what was happening in each family. Now it was different. They lived farther apart now, and it would take effort to keep in touch.

Margaret's own departure from Webenheim began just a few months ago and ended here near Pekin, Illinois, in Tazewell County. The immediate family of Margaret strung out their trips to the new world as they needed to do so by expense and the difficult travel involved. Her step son Christian was first in 1853, then step daughter Louisa in 1854, and then her son Louis in 1861. This year, 1862, the rest of the family came which included herself, daughter Margaret, and sons Frederick, Charles, Jacob, and Daniel. The only child left in Webenheim was Catherine. She was too sick to travel to America this year. Her departure would have to be later.

The children and step children of Margaret worked like a well-oiled machine to get most of their family to the new world. Stepson Christian had worked as an indentured servant for one year after his arrival to both pay his passage and to save enough for his sister to come the following year. Then both of them worked for several years to make enough money for Louis' passage. With three of them in America, they worked several years to pay for the passages of those coming in 1862. The grand arrival date had been Saturday, June 14, and Margaret was still pinching herself to believe most of the family were now together. This was cause for celebration and her family was organizing the event, and rightly so, since they were the last to arrive. It was

their turn to show appreciation to the rest of the Moschels for all they had done to help them through the last decade, a very difficult decade for the widow with seven children and two step children. But now they were in America and they would make a life here...together.

Margaret had been in Pekin just one month. Everything was strange and new, some things good and almost all different. She was beginning to get a routine going and that made things feel more stable. She could not have done this without her oldest stepchild, Louisa. Louisa had been in America for 8 years, married, and had a family. It was Louisa and her husband, Jacob Mueller, who rented a house for them. Louisa had been helped by the rest of the Moschels who lived in Illinois.

Margaret wanted to find a way to thank them all. She had planned this event in her mind over and over on the ship's arduous passage. When the seas were rough, she took her mind off of it by thinking of the day when she would thank all the Moschels for what they had done since her husband died in 1856. She tried to envision what it would be like to be in America and to connect with all the people who had been a part of her early life in Webenheim. It was time to bring reality to what she had planned so many times in her head before.

Margaret gathered her pen and paper and went into the morning room, at least it would be lighter there if the storm darkened the entire sky, which it looked like it might do. Her first letter was to sister-in-law Susanna Moschel who was married to Nicholas Moschel, a brother of her husband. They lived in Morton, Illinois, which was about 6 miles from Pekin. Then another letter to her husband's brother, John, who lived in Washburn, Illinois, and had been the leader in bringing his family to America in 1853. The third letter was to her niece, Jacobina Moschel Sandmeyer who lived further downstate in Versailles, Illinois, knowing she would have to travel by steamer if they came to the gathering.

Her last letter was to her husband's two sisters and brother who lived together in Peoria which was 7 miles up the Illinois River and on the other side. Margaret started the letter.

*July 14, 1862*

*Dear Elizabeth, Charlotte, and Frederick,*

*I have not had time to write since we arrived on June 14. The last time I wrote I was half way around the world, and it's remarkable I am now so close. It was great to see John after so many years a couple of weeks ago, but I'm looking forward ever so much to seeing all of you. Our first month has gone better than I hoped it would. We are finding space for everyone and we are together, that's what matters. Louis, Frederick, Charles, Jacob and even Daniel are working in the fields today, a very storm threatening day as I'm sure it is up your way as well. It is so good to have Louis with us again and he understands some of the new ways. All the agricultural practices are strange and next year we will be breaking our own ground and raising corn as everyone else here does. All new; all strange.*

*I've been to Pekin a couple times. Pekin seems like a good small town, and there are plenty of German immigrants here, particularly from Bavaria. I can do very well in town speaking German and do all the shopping and business I need to do. Louisa and her husband are members of St. Paul's German Evangelical Church and that is where we are going as well. Peoria is larger and seems to have all the services we need. You must tell me which*

*places you have found to be the best as far as bakers, furniture makers, harness makers, clothiers, candle maker. I will need to know what you think is best. Louise has some opinions but I would value yours....*

Margaret thought about Charlotte, her sister in law, as she was writing this letter. Charlotte had not left Webenheim in the best of circumstances. Charlotte, always a bit head strong, did not get along well with her father-in-law in Webenheim. Charlotte pleaded with her husband to come to America and make a new start without his parents, but he would not. Charlotte took matters into her own hands and in the dark of night took her son, Jacob, out of the house and traveled to LeHavre to catch a ship to America. What then transpired was the talk of Webenheim for long after. Charlotte's husband went to LeHavre and found Charlotte and his son and asked them both to return. The son did. Charlotte did not. She went to America. And that was Charlotte. She made her own life...her own way. Margaret heard the gossip in Webenheim. People talked about her sister-in-law, but Margaret liked her spirit. Charlotte was certainly good to her family and that was what mattered now.

Charlotte turned out to be our connection between past and present and the story passed down through several generations in Webenheim was then retold to those of us following this story in 2001. Markus labeled it a 'thriller' as he discovered it and then passed it on to us in email stateside. We were hooked, and there were even pictures.

# 2001 Thriller

After the initial email on March 4, 2001, the emails back and forth to Germany went fast and furious. By the end of the month on March 31, this email was received from Markus with a subject line of **Thriller**. Could Michael Jackson be far behind.

*Hi Theresa!*

*Our supper talk this evening was about the Moschels who went to America and now hear what Oma (his grandmother Elfriede) said:*

*Charlotte (sister of my Philipp and your Christian), married Friedrich Scherer but she had not a good relationship to her father-in-law. There must be quarrel between them but her husband always agreed with his father. She asked him "either you break off with your father or I will go to America!" But her husband didn't drop his father. Under cover of darkness she took her son and vanished to Le Havre where she wanted to get a ship. The husband drove to her and asked the son to come with him. The son did and Charlotte entered the ship alone. Years after, she wrote a letter to her son and asked him if he want to come to America. But he had a girl friend in Webenheim so he refused because of his fiancee. Charlotte agreed with his decision and sent money to him. The son married the girl that he loved and build a house which still exists!!!*

Then Markus told another family story and email ended with this.

*Oh, I nearly forget another incredible incident. After telling this stories, Elfriede (Oma) said she has some pictures inherited from her grandmother and she had them from her mother Caroline Moschel (!). Elfriede went to her "gudd stubb" that is dialect and means "gute stube" and that means good room, a room only for Christmas, birthday and other special events. She came back with an old ornate box. In it there were 4 photos. Elfriede said her grandmother said the box came from America and the woman on the left above should be Charlotte Moschel, the Charlotte who went away in the night. fantastic, isn't it ?*

*I'm sure I hear about you this evening!!*

Markus, was certainly correct with the latter statement, we went on for several messages. My response was...

*One wonders if Charlotte was a bigamist, I note it is almost the same word in German.*

*Charlotte had a husband in Germany and then she had one in the U.S. One wonders if Mr. Scherer died in Webenheim before she married in the U.S. We have her marrying a Mr. Wiedman. Charlotte, by our records, dies in St. Louis. All the rest of the Moschel family went either to Chenoa, Illinois (my hometown) or Beatrice, Nebraska. The only other person I know of who went to St. Louis was Christian Moschel, son of "my" Christian Moschel.*

*This woman made her own life! It adds to the intrigue.*

To which Markus said.

*I'm not sure that she is guilty of bigamy. Elfriede says that the sea divorces a marriage. I think there could be a law (maybe Bavarian judicial affairs) that regulates these cases when one partner emigrates and left the other at home. Remember that the government did not like these emigrations. They had to apply for an exit permit....*

*Good Night, Markus*

The latter statement turned out not to be true as Markus continued to research for at least another hour and kept sending emails.

We were on to the thriller and whatever else was going to happen as a result of reconnecting after 150 years apart. As I reflected on what I had just learned, I figured my relationship to the mysterious Charlotte. Charlotte was my 3rd great aunt. Then I figured Elfriede's (Markus' grandmother) relationship to Charlotte. It was the same, 3rd great aunt. I wondered if I was not listening to stories when I was a child in Illinois. Why did Elfriede know so much personal family history about the 1850's and I knew nothing. Nothing. Certainly I was listening now. Elfriede spent a lot of time with her grandmother and heard these stories and remembered them. I was 11th of 13 grandchildren of Amelia Margaret. Amelia died when I was 14 and almost 3 years prior to her death she was bedfast with a stroke and unable to speak well. I could not remember one story Grandmother Amelia told about her mother or other relatives who came from Germany, certainly nothing about 3rd great aunts coming to America in the 1850's under mysterious circumstances.

Charlotte became a person 'of high interest' to us. For those of us in the U.S. we understood from the Moschel book compiled in 1939 that Charlotte was born in 1807 in Webenheim and married to Jacob Scherer and they had one son named Jacob and she came to America and lived in Peoria, Illinois, and married Mr. Wiedeman and died in St. Louis. That was it.

Now we wanted to know more about Charlotte and whether she divorced before she came to the U.S. and also about the three other individuals in the picture case. Two were young women, one with a child, and one young man. Markus' grandmother, we were all calling her Oma now, said the women were sisters and had both been married to the man in the picture. More intrigue. More thinking and research needed.

The year 2001 was moving on and the newly energized Moschel team wanted to write about Germany in 1862 and the BMW was clawing at the chance to go across the country via Beatrice, Nebraska, to Chenoa, Illinois. Yes, we were on the move in many ways. As I began thinking about writing about Germany in 1862 and trying to make it easier to understand the relationships of the people in Germany and the U.S. in 1862 I thought of my Uncle Don, the former POW in Germany who in his mid life became a long-distance runner and marathoner, and he told me the way he kept going mile after mile was to think of his family every step of the way. I put that idea in the back of my head as I began to think of Philipp Moschel in Germany.

# 1862 Webenheim

Now we return to the fatherland in Webenheim, Germany, where some of the Moschels still remained in 1862 even though now most of the family lived in Illinois, half way around the world. Philipp Moschel was born in 1813 and in the autumn of 1862 he was 48 and a farmer in Webenheim and a brother to the Charlotte just mentioned in the picture case and brother-in-law to Margaret Schantz Moschel, widow of Christian Moschel.

As is the case with farmers in this part of the world at this time, he had to walk some distance from his house to the various small fields he owned. Philipp was on one of his walks back from his field near Mimbach to his home in the village of Webenheim on a cold, crisp day in October.

Philipp could see the Mimbach church in the distance and within five minutes he would make his habitual stops at the church cemetery. These stops to visit his family comforted him and were an anchor to his life, reminding him to slow down and honor the past. The field work was almost done this year and he was ready to slow his pace before the onset of winter. These walks back and forth from the field seemed arduous during the planting, cultivating, and harvesting season, but now it was different. There was less worry about getting the crop in and providing for his family this year. At 48 years of age each year's farming tasks were getting more difficult. If only I had a son to help, Philipp thought. This reoccurring thought went in and out of his mind quickly. It had to. There were no sons.

Philipp was a farmer, always had been and always will be. Today he was walking back from the im pfaffeneck field near the church where he had planted barley this year. The grain had been harvested and was ready to be milled, but he was surveying this field near Mimbach and considering what crop he would raise there next year. This year it had been barley, next year it would be clover. He was also going to talk with the mill owner today in Mimbach, Daniel Weber, to see when he could mill his grain. Before talking with Daniel, he would stop at the cemetery. Remember the past before dealing with the present thought Philipp.

Philipp quickened his gait and now was just a few yards from the Mimbach church and cemetery. He knew where he was going. He had done it dozens of times before. Or so it seemed. First he would go to the grave marker of his parents. There it was, Beloved Wife and Mother Maria Elisabetha Agne, and further down the stone was carved Beloved Father George Nickel Moschel. His mother died in 1851 and his father died 13 months later. Both of them had been gone a decade. Sometimes it seemed that long or longer and other times it seemed like yesterday. He remembered the funeral processions carrying the caskets from Webenheim to Mimbach for both. Each in winter. Each cold.

In 1851, when his mother died, all of his siblings were still in Webenheim. The family procession to the cemetery in Mimbach included all the adult children: Elisabetha,

Bartholemaus, Christian, Johannes, Friedrich, Jakob, Nickel, himself, and Charlotte. Afterwards they all walked back to Webenheim to his father's house to eat. Now he thought of that as a pleasant time. At the time he did not. Time has a way of changing your perceptions. Even though it was a sad occasion in 1851, they were all together, except for his mother. He was 37 then and could imagine no larger sorrow than losing one's mother. Philipp, though, was no stranger to sorrow, even in 1851. He had three sons born, three sons die. Early death of children was a part of his life.

Loss was a constant in Philipp's life in the 1850's and early 1860's. In the span of a short decade he lost parents, brothers, sisters, and children. Some to death. Some to emigration. There was only one brother left in Webenheim, and he was quite ill. How could this happen in such a short time?

Philipp had to stop this thinking and keep on with his habit, well honed, of honoring these losses. Next stop in the cemetery was at the grave marker for his brother Christian. The words on the marker said Beloved Husband and Father Christian Moschel, born October 5, 1800, died January 3, 1856. His brother was buried with two of his infant children. The cold burial day was another family procession from Webenheim to the Mimbach cemetery. The meal after Christian's funeral was at the home of his family. His wife, Margaret Schantz Moschel, was pregnant when her husband Christian died. Two of Christian's children had already emigrated to America by the time their father died, but seven children remained in Webenheim. Brother Christian's death had occurred only 4 years after his father's death.

Buried next to Christian was his brother, Bartholemaus, born June 15, 1798, and died May 17, 1856, the same year as Christian. Phillip remembered the funeral procession as being a warm day. Bartholemaus was buried with two infant daughters and his wife had joined him here this year as well. Some of Bartholemaus children had left for America now as well. The times were changing.

The last stop in the cemetery was always the same. It was his family plot, which already had three names. Three sons born. Three sons died. The top of the stone read, Hier ruhen in Gott and then each of his sons were listed.

Philipp was ready to leave the cemetery grounds after a silent prayer and touching the family marker with his right hand and then touching his hand to his lips. The next part of his habit for remembering would take place after he talked with Daniel at the Mimbach mill.

Philipp left the mill. Daniel told him when the barley could be milled, and Phillip made plans to do that. After this thinking was done, he returned to remembering his losses before reaching home, symbolically leaving them outside so he could focus on what was happening at home when he arrived at the door. Some people might think all of this a bit morose, but not Philipp. He thought of it as a way to honor what had happened to him and the changes endured over such a short time. The Moschels had been in Mimbach/Webenheim since the 1500's, now many of them were gone but not buried here as in the past.

Philipp knew he had about 11,000 steps, a German mile plus 1000, to make it to home from Mimbach to Webenheim. Philipp started his walk down the main street of Mimbach. Long ago he had marked off the steps, and knew the visual marker where he would be at 1000 steps, 2000 steps, 3000 steps. He divided his walking time from Mimbach in the following way. For the first 1000 steps he thought of pleasant times with his mother; the second 1000 steps he thought of pleasant times with his father; the third 1000 steps he thought of pleasant times with his brother Christian, for the fourth 1000 steps he thought of pleasant times with brother Bartholemaus, and for the fifth 1000 steps he prayed for his little sons buried in Mimbach.

This remembering brought him half of the way to Webenheim. By this time he had crossed the road that went to Blieskastel to the left and he started the slight ascent to Webenheim. For the remaining 5000 steps he thought of each of his siblings and son who had gone to America. He would never see them again, and for all practical purposes, he had lost them as well. The sixth 1000 steps he thought of his older sister Elisabetha who now lived in Peoria, Illinois. On the seventh 1000 steps he thought of brother Johannes and family who went to American in 1853 and now lived in Washburn, Illinois. The eighth 1000 steps he thought of brother Friedrich who now lived in Peoria, Illinois with his sister Elisabetha. The ninth 1000 steps he thought of brother Nickel and family who now lived in Morton, Illinois. On the tenth 1000 steps he thought of sister Charlotte who now lived in Peoria, Illinois. All of these locations sounded strange to him. Just words. He felt such a loss that he had no sense of the places where they lived.

Now Philipp was up to the last 1000 steps, and the most difficult for him. His view was the fields on the right and behind Webenheim. He could see the River Blies which was at high water. It had gone over its banks and covered the meadows beside it as it often did in the fall. At least some things don't change.

He was nearing the village edge. He could clearly see the steeple of the church. Every time he looked at it he thought of brother Christian repairing the steeple in 1842. Christian hired him to work on it as well. Together they repaired the steeple and earned good money. Now the present church congregation was talking about razing the church and building a new one. More change. He shook his head as if he was talking to someone.

Philipp was coming to the final steps of his walk of remembering. The last 1000 steps Philipp thought of his oldest and only living son, Christian, who would be 26 next month. Christian was married and living in Peoria, Illinois, with his wife and daughter. This was a daughter-in-law Philipp had not met and a grandchild he had not seen. Philipp knew he would probably never meet this grandchild or the new grandchild coming later this year.

On the first few steps of this last thousand he thought of his son Christian and his early years and how much he enjoyed him, naming him after one of brothers. Philipp began reflecting about those early years that went all too fast. Soon Christian was eligible to be recruited for military service. Christian was called to the Bavarian recruitment office in Speyer. At this time Christian indicated his reluctance for duty. This was the turning point. Christian left the country, avoiding the draft, and within three months he had made his way to Illinois to join the Moschel relatives there.

Philipp's house was now in view and his last thoughts were about his daughter Jacobina who was also in America and working as a servant in a private home. Phillip could now see his sister-in-law outside on her side of the house tending the cattle. Phillip told himself, as he had told himself many times, now was the time to think of the pleasant times with all of these people. Leave these losses at the village entrance and join them again for another walk from Mimbach to Webenheim. He was ready to join his family and see what they were doing on this beautiful fall day.

Philipp climbed the three stones to the wooden door, opened it, and he surveyed the scene as he entered the hallway. To his right is a stairway up to the bedrooms. On the left side is the living room which is only used on Sundays and other special festival days. There are two small windows with white curtains. Straight into the house was the quite large kitchen where there was a big iron stove to cook with and the cooking dishes hanging on the wall. Above the stove wet clothes are drying. There is wood stored in the corner. Near the stove is a dark wooden cupboard. Fresh water is in a bucket which came from the pump outside the house. In the middle of the room is a long wooden table with several chairs around it. The floor in the kitchen is tile, but the floors in the rest of the house are wooden. There is one comfortable chair, with footstool, by the fireplace. His wife, Louise, is not there, but his daughter Caroline is present as well as his niece, Catherine. With great excitement niece Catherine ran to him.

"I got a letter from Mamma today! Everyone is fine in Illinois and she tells about all the family getting together. She planned the event. We've all read the letter, do you want me to read it to you?"

Philipp much appreciated his niece's offer, but said, "Oh Catherine, I'm so pleased, but let me read it first alone, and then we will all read it together again."

Catherine handed him the letter and knew instantly he wanted to be alone while he read the letter. Philipp knew she understood. She was 13 but acted much older than her years. She had to by all she had experienced in her young years.

Philipp took the letter and knew immediately where he wanted to go to read it. He choose the comfortable chair by the fireplace. Philipp read the letter once and then started reading it again slowly, savoring every word on the page. Phrases struck him, "All 47 Moschels came to the gathering on Sunday" "We managed to have a true Webenheim meal in the middle of Illinois" "Tell your Uncle Philipp we had a special moment for his brother Johannes. We all feel indebted to him for leading the way to America. I made a special embroidery piece with thank you words and Ludwig made a frame for it. I had everyone sign on the back of the frame before we presented it to him. He said little, but I could tell it meant a lot to him." "We have German schools, churches, newspapers, singing groups, and it's as much like home as we can make it."

Philipp felt an enormous feeling of loss as he read these words a second time. This was a familiar feeling, one he had come to accept in the last decade, but it did not make it any easier. He knew what he had to do next.

Philipp got up from his chair, "Catherine, I want to go read this letter to Jakob now, and then I will come back and we can all read it together again. Would that be alright?" Catherine understood her uncle's feelings since she, too, was separated from her family.

"Yes, and have him come for dinner tonight. It is my turn to cook and I will fix something Uncle Jakob likes."

With that, Philipp was out the door to see his only brother remaining in Webenheim. Jakob's wife died almost 20 years ago and two children had died as well. Brother Jakob would not be America bound, and neither would Philipp. They would be the Moschels remaining in Webenheim in the decade of the 1860s.

# Summer 2001

Even though early June is not officially summer we knew the prospect of hot and humid weather could occur on a cross country trip in the BMW from Oregon to Illinois. Little did I know how hot and how humid. Trip planning was going ahead full blast as June started and on June 6 we were off on Beaming America. Starting mileage was 12397 and driver Jack was ready to go at 7:29. One of the intended highlights across the country was a stop at Beatrice, Nebraska, the eventual home and burial place for Margaret Schantz Moschel.

Our routine was familiar enough from earlier genealogy trips. One researches and plans for months for one particular day, only to find that the day is nonstop rain, or you cannot find any information you are seeking, or being dead tired on a day where you wanted total alertness. We had done this before in Scotland, as I pointed in a torrential rain “this is where Adam Smith wrote *Wealth of Nations*” and many other sights of the day we were suppose to see on the way to find the Munros in Arbroath. We saw none. Rural Ireland, near Limerick, was much the same in rain and ever narrowing roads and Gallic speaking residents trying to give us instructions we could not follow. On the first trip to Webenheim, Germany, not even knowing we would go there, I was counting on my rusty memory to ask the only person we could find in Webenheim speaking English, “do you know any Moschels?” We had much the same experience in family trekking on Jack's side of the family. We were not deterred. It is the adventure and you go with what happens.

The plan was to go to the Homestead National Monument outside of Beatrice, Nebraska, and then on into town and find more if we could. The trip that started on June 6 had us at Hastings, Nebraska, on the morning of June 11. Two and one half hours later we were at the Homestead National Monument. We viewed everything there was to review and noted it was hot and humid at 90 degrees. This was mid morning.

At the Monument I verified everything researched ahead of time. The Homestead Act passed in May 1862 which allowed for citizens to lay claim to 160 acres if they improved the land and grew crops for five years. The first claimant for land was Daniel Freeman who got a brief furlough in December 1862 from his Civil War obligations to go to Nebraska. He choose his homestead site just outside of Beatrice, Nebraska Territory. The law stipulated a petitioner was to go to the nearest Land Office to apply for their land. Freeman went to Brownsville, Nebraska Territory, which was 40 miles from his intended claim on December 31, 1862. He found the small Missouri River town was filled with potential settlers who wanted to stake claims on the first day possible by law. As the story goes, Freeman told all he had to get back to his war post but wanted to be the first homesteader. He convinced them to open up the claims office a few minutes after midnight on January 1, 1863, (satisfying the requirements of the law) for him alone and he completed his application as No. 1 in the Brownsville office. If it is not true, it still makes one heck of a good story. His homestead patent #1 was for 160 acres on Cub Creek near Beatrice, Nebraska Territory. The Homestead National Monument is located on the site of his claim.

In 1876 Margaret Schantz Moschel and several of her adult children moved to Beatrice, Nebraska, after Margaret owned land in her own name in Chenoa, Illinois. Daniel Freeman, the first homesteader, lived 3.5 miles North of Beatrice, and Margaret Schantz Moschel's 1886 obituary notice stated she died at the home of her son, Louis Moschel, three miles north of the city. The Freemans were in Blakely Township and the Moschels lived in Midland Township. They lived within a mile of each other for at least a decade and it was almost certain they knew each other. I knew all this as we trekked from the Homestead Monument into Beatrice.

We drove into Beatrice and took the spa suite at the Holiday Inn, let us live in luxury in Beatrice we thought. After a stop at the library at 2 p.m. we were off to Scott Cemetery to find graves of the Moschels and Kleins. The temperature gauge in the BMW was hitting 102 degrees as we were taking pictures in the cemetery. I wish I could say I had some great feeling when we finally found Margaret Schantz Moschel's grave and I took my picture beside it, but at the moment all I felt was very, very hot and ready to get back to the air-conditioned Holiday Inn. There had been a reason why I moved to the Northwest where it is often cool, showery, and cloudy.

After the cemetery we continued searching, but could not find the homes of either the Moschels or the Kleins. The next task was to send postcards from Beatrice to Greg, Markus, and Elly. The spa suite looked very good by the end of this hot day which found me emailing Greg, Markus, and Elly and describing the day's adventures. At 8 p.m. it was still 96 degrees. Welcome to the Midwest, but the journey of following Margaret to where she last lived had been accomplished. I thought this no small deed as I had been to Webenheim, Pekin, Chenoa, and now Beatrice. This woman had traveled, and now so had I.

One thing about long car trips is they give you plenty of time to think and talk. Jack knew the story of the Moschels as well as I did. He had read everything written up to that point and at least feigned good interest in the story. Also he had been to all the places where the Moschels had lived as well. Thus he was invested in the story.

As much as I found myself wondering about the Moschels who moved to America, we spent time discussing those Moschels who stayed in Webenheim and lived the rest of their days there. Why? As we were tooling toward Illinois we were reflecting on Philipp Moschel and why he stayed in Webenheim when almost all the rest of his generation moved to the America.

Philipp's only son, Christian, goes to America, probably avoiding the draft. Philipp and his wife Louise have four daughters. Two, Louisa and Caroline, we know led their lives out in Webenheim.

Philipp lives in a house from his wife's side of the family, not the Moschel side of the family. It was a big house according to Markus' grandmother, Elfriede, and the house was divided between Philipp's wife and her sister, each family having one half of the house in 1862. The house then passed to Philipp and Louise's daughters, Caroline and Louisa. The house was destroyed in 1955 to make way for a new street. These are things we knew because of Oma.

Philipp was a farmer and he probably had several small plots of land, all near Mimbach and Webenheim. The very curious thing we wondered is "why oh why did the youngest son end up staying in Webenheim?" By custom whatever property father Georg had upon death would have been divided equally between the children. It was probably a case of too little land and too many children. In this case we have the oldest adult children either going to America or dying in Webenheim. The two remaining in Webenheim in 1862 are Philipp and Jakob. Because it appears Philipp married into a family with at least the wealth of a large house, Markus speculated it was possible Philipp had enough money to buy out each of his siblings and stay on in Webenheim to farm the original Moschel land. Other possibilities were he had already used his inheritance to buy land and did not have enough money for passage to America, or his wife could have been against emigration. Conjecture, conjecture, conjecture.

One thing Jack and I now knew is there was lots of land in and around Beatrice and several Moschels came here. In fact land as far as the eye and BMW could see, flat and hot as we moved on.

We were moving toward Chenoa, Illinois, where the Moschels had lived. The trip to Illinois was through Iowa which gave Jack a chance to do some genealogy. Fair is fair after all. Hot weather continued for that as well. Then we went on to Peoria, Illinois, where Jack had relatives researching his side of the family and we met them.

Peoria made me think of the mysterious Charlotte Moschel in the picture case who lived in Peoria for a time. Since our earlier discussions on Charlotte, Greg had learned more. Over time Greg discovered a lot about Charlotte. Webenheim Evangelical church records found Charlotte was born in 1817, married Frederick Scherer in 1842 and had a son Jacob in 1843 and a daughter in 1845 who died in 1846. Boat passenger lists recorded Charlotte's name as Moschel rather than Scherer when she came to America. Why? We did not know. She arrived in the U.S. on November 21, 1853, with other Moschel relatives on the same boat and traveled to Illinois, settling in Peoria. Illinois census records showed Charlotte lived with her brother Frederick and sister Elizabeth until 1864 when her siblings died within six weeks of each other. Charlotte cared for them during their last illnesses and on that basis made a claim against their estates and a judge approved the claim. In 1865 Charlotte moved to Missouri and the following year married William Wieners in St. Louis. Mr. Wieners had a son and daughter from his first marriage. Charlotte died in St. Louis in 1873 from cancer at age 56. Those were the things we now knew about Charlotte. Greg could be counted on to be thorough.

While in Chenoa, Illinois, we saw not only the living relatives but went to all the cemeteries we had been to before. Piece by piece I was finally getting a total picture of my family background and how it all came together, at least on Mom's side of the family, in Pike Cemetery where I was surrounded by the names of Moschel, Klein, Phillips, Munro, and Sandmeyer. I had traveled to each of the places from where these people had emigrated in Germany, England, and

Scotland, and now I was where many were buried. I had been here before, but now it all made sense to me on a different level.

We left Illinois on June 16 and by June 22 we were back in Eugene, Oregon, with an ending mileage of 17650 and 5256 miles had lapsed since June 6. A trek indeed. A renewal happens after most trips, and this was no exception.

There was motivation to continue research and writing the Moschel story. The rest of the Moschel team thought so as well as we envisioned telling what it was like in 1876 where all the Moschels lived at that time. We continued to wonder...who is in that picture case besides Charlotte? Could it be Philipp's son Christian who lived in the U.S.? Someone else?

# 1876 Midwest & Plains

The Peoria, Illinois, area is where most of the Moschel immigrated in the 1850's and 1860's. By 1876 the Moschels who had led the way to America were dying. Brother and sister Elizabeth Moschel and Frederick Moschel both died in Peoria in 1864. Johann Moschel, the first of that generation to come to America in 1853, died in 1870 in Woodford Co., Illinois. Still living of that generation were Johann Nickel Moschel who came to America in 1861. Johann Nickel became a U.S. citizen in 1868, and then he traveled back to Webenheim in 1870, bringing more relatives with him when he returned. He continued to live in the Morton, Illinois, area in 1876. Charlotte Moschel, the woman in the picture case, who initially lived in Peoria, Illinois, and then moved to the St. Louis area marrying a second time, died in 1873.

Two things that made the farmer's life now better in the Illinois area were drainage and transportation. Wet soil, the bane of the early farmer's existence, was transformed by tile drainage. By 1879 almost every farm in the county had underdrain tiling. The effect of the tile was momentous. Not only better crops, but fewer mosquitoes and deaths from malaria declined. The railroads, as in other parts of the country, made it possible for crops to get to market. By the end of 1895 McLean County (where Chenoa resides) had one of the densest rural rail networks in the world. No farmer was more than four miles from the nearest track. For many of the Moschels it was a move from their original location of the Peoria, Illinois, area to the area near Chenoa, Illinois, and the farm land there. They were beginning to be owners in this adopted land. By the early 1860's over 5000 acres had been improved by Matthew Scott in the Chenoa, Illinois, area. In 1862 improved land was selling for \$20 an acre and unimproved \$11 an acre. Many Germans were moving into the area and, if not buying from Scott, were buying from others. From the years of 1865 to 1873 most of the farms which had been broken earlier and had partial farm buildings, were further improved to add additional houses, barns, stables, wells, orchards, shade trees, and a vineyard. The crops raised were corn and oats with rye, barley, and flax as minor crops.

The Moschels saw a good situation and bought land. Margaret Schantz Moschel purchased land in 1869 and 1870 in neighboring Livingston County, but very near Chenoa, Illinois. Her children Margaret, Frederick, and Jacob purchased in the area as well as did her niece Jacobina Sandmeyer and husband George. They were there to farm. And then some to leave. Margaret Schantz Moschel was simultaneously a part of a small group of Moschels of her generation still knowing the ways of Webenheim, Germany, and adjusting to the ways of America culture as an older woman. She had already adjusted to arriving in a country in the midst of a Civil War and having a step son fight in that war, then the years of Reconstruction after the Civil War, and now she was ready to move further West with her youngest son where it she would take on the role of pioneer to a relatively new land of white people. Why was she moving again? Three of her adult children were staying in Illinois, and four of her children cast their lot with going further West.

Margaret, for whatever combination of reasons, was moving on to Beatrice, Nebraska, rather than remain in the more settled region of Illinois.

This story takes place in the summer of 1876 when Margaret Schantz Moschel is readying to move. Margaret is 62 in the spring of 1876. Her children and stepchildren are adults and all leading their own lives. These lives are led in Chenoa, Illinois; Pekin, Illinois; Beatrice, Nebraska; and St. Louis, Missouri.

It was a glorious spring day in Central Illinois. The farmers prayed for this kind of day to dry the wet lands in hopes that they could plant soon. In her 14 years in Illinois Margaret had come to know the rhythm of farming in Illinois. Corn was the main crop, and she had learned a lot about corn over the years. She also learned about the rich Illinois land and how to farm it. This land needed to be drained in order to be productive after it had been broken from prairie land.

It all had been so new to her. She had grown up following the rhythms of a cabinetmaker, first as an apprentice and later as he owned his own cabinet shop, with his own apprentices. Life in Illinois was totally different and it depended on the whims of the land and the good graces of nature to make money. She adjusted to that. She had to.

Margaret acquired land in Livingston County from Anna Wallace by quitclaim deed on July 19, 1869. The property was E' SW' in Section 16, Township 27, Range 4. Margaret purchased additional land on September 19, 1870, from the Illinois Central Railroad Co. This time it was the S ½ NE' in Section 22, Township 27. Margaret still owned these pieces of land in 1876. Yes, she, a woman and widow from Germany, owned land in America under her own name. Who would have ever thought that possible 14 years ago when she came to America. Certainly she did not think this would be the outcome. Margaret and her children worked hard over the years to make this happen. They lived through bad crop years and also the financial panic of 1873 which ended up affecting everyone in some way. For some of Margaret's children it was a spur to move on to what they hoped would be greener pastures by going West.

When Margaret reflected on it all, she was proud, very proud of what they had done. She felt she had launched almost all of her children into adult life successfully. They were all married except Daniel, and she was sure he would find someone soon. They had all married German people, and she was certain the values of the old world would be continued in this new world for at least the next generation.

The idea of the family being split apart gnawed at her deeply. Sure, step son Christian was in St. Louis, but he had always been very independent and he had made such a good life for himself in his business. Margaret had traveled to St. Louis to see his general store and gravel company and knew his father's business sense had been passed on to his oldest son. She felt assured that he would continue to well. No doubt about it. She did not have to worry about him. Step daughter Louisa would join them in Beatrice soon. That would be good for her.

Today Margaret was attempting to sort things to go to Beatrice and things to go to the children and grandchildren staying in Illinois. She had three wooden boxes set aside with names on them. Some of the boxes were larger and had these names on them: **Margaret, Frederick,** and **Jacob**. These were the children she would leave behind in Illinois. Both symbolically and for real she wanted to leave a part of herself here for them. She had thought carefully for days about what she would leave each of them.

She looked first at the box labeled **Margaret**. Margaret was her oldest daughter, her namesake, and what would she put in this box. She already had some dishes and towels and other things she had sewed over the years in Illinois. Now it was time to put in the most important thing. She thought about it for days, and now she placed her husband's journal in Margaret's box. This was the journal he was given in 1813 by his father the first day of his apprenticeship in Webenheim. Christian was 13 at the time. It was the same journal Margaret had read the days after her husband died to comfort herself. Now she would leave it in Illinois. There was really no better symbol she could leave to her oldest daughter. Something that meant the world to her, but she knew it was time to pass on. With that thought she caressed it one last time, kissed it, and placed it in the box.

Mother Margaret wanted to put in something for each of daughter Margaret's children, her grandchildren. She had a small piece of jewelry for each of the girls: Katharine, Caroline, Anna, and little Matilda and tiny little cup for John D. with his name on it. She had spent so much time with these grandchildren in the last 11 years since Katharine was born. She told them stories about Germany, where she was born, and her family and their grandfather whom they had never met. She hoped they would remember. These were her oldest grandchildren and she would miss them terribly in the years to come. She knew that already.

Margaret consoled herself with the facts she knew. John Klein, her son-in-law, was a fine man; a hard worker; and he was clear he was going to be important in this new community of Chenoa. Her son-in-law had come to the U.S. from Bavaria, Germany, in 1855 with his entire family. John had been motivated to emigrate in order to avoid the draft. Margaret thought that prudent, never knowing what the King of Bavaria would do. John had worked for one year after his arrival in America to pay off his passage. The second year the family rented a farm near Peoria before moving on to the Chenoa. His father purchased a farm in 1864. John learned to speak English on his own and started renting land in Tazewell County just four years after his arrival in Illinois. In 1869, after the marriage in 1864, Margaret and John Klein came to the Chenoa area and located on a partially improved farm of forty acres which they had purchased a year before. As their financial resources increased, John and Margaret added both acreage and then cultivation of land. John Klein became a citizen on March 28, 1872. He became a Democrat and voted for Samuel J. Tilden in 1876. John was a man that was destined to do much in this small community, Mother Margaret was sure of that. She had no need to worry about her daughter Margaret. She just had to worry about missing her and her grandchildren.

Mother Margaret decided to put an envelope in her daughter's box for her son-in-law as well. She added a small amount of money and note, "For your next bow tie." She liked how John looked when he dressed up.

Next, Margaret turned to the her boxes labeled **Frederick** and **Jacob**. Each of her sons were just starting married life, Frederick and his wife Louise were just expecting their first child and Jacob and Caroline had a son less than one year old. Neither wife had not been born in Germany and their German was somewhat hard for Margaret to understand, and Margaret's English was far from perfect. Margaret felt she had to treat these new daughters-in-law alike so she put a set of dishes in each box; some silverware; a few pots and pans; and even some of her canned goods. Nothing too personal, Margaret thought, but it will leave a little of me here. Margaret still remembered how her own parents had treated her when she became Christian's wife. She wanted to be a little kinder than that.

Margaret tried to think of something more personal for her sons. She decided nothing could be more helpful now than money. She would take some time tomorrow to write each of them a letter and then give them some money. Frederick had owned land in the Chenoa area since 1873. Jacob rented land. But both would understand a gift of money, Margaret told herself.

Margaret gave a big sigh. This sorting and gift giving was hard work emotionally. In many ways it was more difficult than moving from Germany 14 years ago. At that time she still felt she had time and energy and was needed by her family. Now she was older, and the family did not really need her in the same way. She was concerned about not being a burden to them.

By 1876 some Moschels had moved to Beatrice, Nebraska. Margaret was moving away from three children in Illinois, but moving to be with four children in Nebraska. Probably the first Moschel to move to Beatrice was Catherine Moschel with her husband, Jacob Klein, in 1872. Catherine, the Moschel who had stayed behind in Webenheim in 1862 after the others left, was the first to move from the Chenoa, Illinois, area further west. She was followed by her brother Charles Moschel who came in 1873. Then brother Ludwig (Louis), who was married to Catherine Klein (Jacob's sister) making the double relation of brother and sister marrying a brother and sister, then moved West as well. The other Moschel to move to Beatrice was Louisa Moschel Muller, half sister to those Moschels already mentioned.

Beatrice was settled in 1857 by a group of 37 pioneers and the town was named after the daughter of one of the judges in the party. In July of 1857 Gage county was organized with Beatrice as its county seat. At the time the nearest trading post and post office was Brownsville on the Missouri River. Early industry in the town was a flour mill and settlers and homesteaders came for a hundred miles around to get their flour.

The population of Beatrice in 1876 is uncertain, but in 1862 it was not yet 100 people. It was a town that was to grow to 12,000 by 1888 and it served a wide population area at that time. It took vision to see that this might be the place to be. Some of the Moschels had that vision, or alternatively, things were not going too well in Illinois which is the case of many settlers who

moved from one area to another in hope of a better life. Margaret Schantz Moschel would be a part of Beatrice's future for better or worse. Margaret initially lived with her daughter Catherine and her husband, Jacob Klein, and family. They lived above the store the couple were running. The store had been in existence for 3 years and here is how it was introduced to the community in an article from the *Beatrice Express* on September 4, 1873. The heading at the top of the article says **J. Klein & Co.**

"The youngest of the mercantile fraternity of Beatrice is the above firm, who occupy a new two-story built by them on Court Street, near the corner of Second, where they opened business in May last. They carry about \$2000 worth of groceries, notions, queensware, woodenware and willowware, their stock of these articles being fresh and full. Messrs. Klein & Co. came from Illinois to this place, and have named their house the Illinois Store. They have had long experience in their business, and are acquainted with all its mysteries, so that they feel confident of being able to do the fair thing by their patrons at all times."

Margaret Schantz Moschel was going to be a part of the store and the city which was to grow tremendously in the decade she would live there until her death in 1886.

# Fall 2001

In fall 2001 after coming back from the Midwest, I was learning more about Beatrice, Nebraska, than I ever wanted to know. Researching Chenoa, Illinois, where I was raised, was easy because I understood the land and people. Plains people and times were new to me. Team work, or more specifically not wanting to let the team down, kept me at the task of trying to understand the place where some of the Moschels, who were intermarrying with Kleins, moved. In Beatrice we had one relative owning a mercantile business, not farming, and being very successful at same. I knew my grandmother, Amelia **Margaret** Klein Phillips (granddaughter to Margaret Schantz Moschel), and her sister traveled to Beatrice, Nebraska, when they were young and both bought watches from the Klein store, probably before the turn of the century. My mother gave me my great aunt's lapel watch in the case which had a taffeta lining which had printed in three lines: **Klein's Mercantile, Jewelry Department, Beatrice, Nebr.** I brought the watch and case back to Oregon sometime in the early 1970's. Later my house was burgled and only 3 items were taken, the watch being one of them, but not the case. The case, in reality, had more sentimental value because of the taffeta lining and the connection to the family store in Beatrice. In fall 2001 I became a heavy email and postal mail correspondent with the Gage Co. Historical Society in Beatrice. They sent pictures of the first J. Klein & Co. store as well as newspaper articles.

The early articles imply the owners have considerable experience. Later articles, which recall the early history of the store, reveal they had no experience whatsoever. Which is the truth? Probably it is much closer to the latter. It was true they lived above the store, and initially there was a saloon attached to the store which was operated by Charles Moschel, Margaret's son. The saloon is not mentioned in later articles. Probably the tides of change were against the "respectability" of being a saloon owner. The early store was 22' X 36' and located at the corner of 2nd and Court in Beatrice. The first name of the store, Illinois Store, was also dropped as their identification with the past probably dropped as well. As I began figuring all this out, I realized Margaret Schantz Moschel moved to Beatrice, Nebraska, and lived above the Illinois Store with a saloon attached which was operated by her son. Was this the Wild West I had seen in cowboy movies of my youth? Would a sheriff be coming to the saloon and shutting things down with a gun holster around his waist when necessary.

Crusaders, led by Methodist women, were forming a temperance movement in the early 1870's in Beatrice. When researching Peoria, Illinois, history it appeared Germans were the first to start breweries there. Now Germans were moving further west. I began to wonder where my great, great grandmother Margaret Schantz Moschel would have been in all this apparent controversy over drink. In fact I spent a lot of time thinking about Margaret. Through diligent research cousin Greg had found two more generations back of Margarets in Germany. Margaret's mother was Maria Margaretha Wild Schantz and her mother was Maria Margaretha Hilzert. The latest two generations of Margarets were born in Einod, Germany, like Margaret

Schantz Moschel. When I started this project in 1995 I thought I was part of 5 generations of Margarets and now it was 7. I felt momentum to keep moving and understanding these women and their families.

The life of a wannabe writer and genealogist is much in your head. Or at least that is how I operate. I would be driving somewhere and all of a sudden Margaret Schantz Moschel would be along on the trip and I would be imagining her crossing the ocean in 1862. I had written previously about my Irish great grandparents crossing the ocean and got sick, figuratively if not literally, just thinking of what they endured. Their voyage was only one year after Margaret came. My Irish great grandparents came with two small children and Margaret came with older children. Either way it would be no picnic. Further miles on on a drive and I could 'see' Margaret in Pekin, Illinois, and being the matriarch of the family and watching five of her birth children marry in Illinois. Her oldest birth daughter was Margaret, my great grandmother. Why did Margaret move to Beatrice to stay initially with her youngest daughter, Catherine, above a saloon and not stay with her oldest daughter in Illinois? Why? Genealogists and writers make up all kinds of stories in their heads, probably none accurate but you wonder just the same. Margaret's life was to go with her youngest unmarried son to Beatrice and live in the town with her daughter and where her step daughter Louisa and two other sons lived. Left in Illinois was not only her daughter Margaret but two other sons as well.

At the same time I was thinking of Margaret and her move to Nebraska, I was always thinking about Germany. On another drive or a daily walk, I'd find myself thinking about Philipp in Webenheim. Now he seemed like an old friend since I had written about him and knew he was a close relative to Markus and his grandmother, the person who was our oral historian. Philipp was also the brother-in-law to Margaret Schantz Moschel. In my fictional story I had Philipp hosting his niece Catherine Moschel after her mother, Margaret Schantz Moschel, left Germany in 1862 until Catherine left Germany in 1865 to join the family in Illinois. Now I was preparing to write about the same Catherine Moschel, now married to Jacob Klein, living in Beatrice above a saloon with her mother Margaret. Yes, it was becoming a tight knit little family who had connections and interconnections and intrigue, at least in my mind.

Thus in the fall of 2001 I started writing about Beatrice in 1876. I discovered the railroad got to Beatrice in 1871 and thus could envision the Moschels not going overland, but by train. No Oregon Trail story of misery but perhaps a little more gentle than an ocean voyage from old world to new. My world was writing about Catherine Moschel Klein's world of living above a store with 3 children and waiting for her mother to come to Beatrice. It was a fine fall imagining all that.

Little did I know at same time I was writing about Beatrice Greg was doing his very best figuring on the story of the picture case which, as always, brought us back to Charlotte, the woman who left Webenheim and a child behind to come to America. Who was in these pictures besides Charlotte. That was the mystery we were trying to solve. To review the case about the picture case, here is what we knew prior to fall 2001.

On March 31, 2001, Markus told us of the picture case's existence and that his grandmother, whom we were all calling Oma, said the picture case came from America and that Charlotte was one of the four people in the case.

On April 2, 2001, Markus described the case to us. *"It is 16 cm long, 10 cm wide and 2.5 cm high. The weight is 430 grams. The color is dark brown on both sides there is an ornament, showing a wife hold a child in front of a sitting dog. You can open it like a book and inside on each side are two pictures which are inlaid in a golden metal frame. And just now as I photographed it for you I dared to remove the frame and BINGO!!!! This was written inside of the box: 'Littlefield, Parsons & Co. Manufacturers of Daguerreotype Cases L.P. and Co are the sole proprietors only legal manufactures of UNION CASES, with the Embracing Riveted Hinge. Patented October 14, 1856, and April 21, 1857.' OK, now it's proven it's not Made in Hong Kong!!!"*

On April 3, 2001, Markus wrote, *"As I told you, there are FOUR pictures in the case. A woman that should be Charlotte, a young man and two young women, one of them with a child. Due to story of my grandmother, these women should be sisters and one was married with the man above. After her death in young years the man married again, his sister-in-law."*

And that is where we left the story of the picture case for a long time as other research was happening. We knew it was Charlotte but who else was in the picture? Oma's oral story had the man married to both women and then there was the fact it was important enough to have all the pictures sent back to Webenheim and kept for so long in the family.

As time went on the picture case, itself, became a main character in ongoing story of survival. On September 9, 2001, Markus sent this email. By this time we knew better the story of the families in Webenheim and how they had to evacuate from the area in WWII. *"I visited Oma this morning and asked her about the case in WWII. The case was in the house during the 11 months of evacuation 1939-1940. It was in a cupboard in the living-room all the times. And also as the Americans came in the last days of March '45 and the house was empty again the case was in this cupboard. Several things were stolen when the family was far away, but no pictures. The thieves, nobody knows who they were, took the silver and a wooden clock but the picture case was in the cupboard all the times. They travelled by railway and so they couldn't take away very much, only one or two suitcases per person, and clothes were more important than picture cases. They also didn't recognize the worth of this case. But the house nearly burned down in 1945! There was a big hole in the roof because of a granite explosion and the barn behind the house burned down completely. On the street phosphor granites exploded, too. The wooden front-door was burned a little bit, it was full of little burned holes as Oma said. So, you see the house was in serious danger! Other families in Webenheim weren't so lucky. Several houses were destroyed completely and the church steeple was half away. Even today you see the little holes in the church walls according to machine gun fire."*

Time passed, but clearly Greg was working with all the known clues. On November 29, 2001, Greg sent a series of emails that were information packed with the answer to our riddle. The last email, after I asked where he got all this information was, *"I've been working on this for the last couple of months and info has come from numerous sources--censuses, city directories, material in the Oregon State Archives, phone calls to libraries, obituaries, the internet, etc. Greg"*

The months of research by Greg proved the people in the picture were Herman Gerbing, a name new to all of us, who was the husband of both Jacobina and Catherine Moschel, daughters of Philipp Moschel, the man who remained in Webenheim. We knew Philipp's son, Christian, had emigrated to America and first we thought he married twice. No, Greg proved that wrong, he was only married once. Thus, Greg started thinking of Philipp's daughters and that is when he found Gerbing.

Herman Gerbing first had been married to Jacobina Moschel. When she died in 1869, Gerbing married his sister-in-law Catherine Moschel. Thus Oma's story was correct...a man who was married twice and the second marriage was his former sister-in-law.

The picture case had probably been passed down from Philipp, our storyteller in 1862 Webenheim, who was father to the two young women in the picture and brother to Charlotte. Next owner of the case was Philipp's daughter Karoline Moschel Schmidt, sister to the two young women in the picture. Next owner was Karoline's daughter also named Karoline Schmidt Schunk. Next owner was Karoline Schmidt Schunk's daughter who was Lina Schunck, 'our' Oma's mother. The current owner in 2001 was Elfriede Schunck Klein, Markus' Oma and our oral historian. Thus 'our' Oma, Elfriede, had been hearing stories from her Oma who was remembering stories from her mother. That's quite a line of story telling which turned out to be accurate and could be verified by Greg's research.

With this now known as fact we speculated even further what it was like in Webenheim in 1876.

# Webenheim Fall 1876

Our story will continue with Philipp's daughter, Karoline, as our storyteller. Father Philipp is alive, but his daughter now lives in her husband's house. A brief comment on the times Karoline lived. Between 1862 and 1876 there were three periods when Germany was at war. The first two conflicts did not directly affect Webenheim, except for men drafted into the military. The third conflict, though, saw Webenheim in the midst of battle as it would be again in the coming decades. The war with France in 1870 brought German unification. France declared war on July 18, 1870. People in the Webenheim area, because of its location, immediately felt the effects of the war. Between July 18 and 26 a Bavarian infantry regiment was billeted in the area. That was only the beginning. The area became a battleground between the Prussians and the French. The most famous battle was at Spicherer Berg where several Saarbrücken regiments defeated the French troops. Two divisions under the leadership of Field Marshall Prinz Friedrich Karl came directly through Webenheim. The date was August 7, 1870, a Sunday, and the citizens of Webenheim watched the marching thousands of men come through. In total there were two divisions of between 50,000 to 60,000 soldiers following the Field Marshal. The soldiers pitched their tents in Webenheim on this day swelling the towns' population from 800 people to 50,000 plus.

Another notable date was April 16, 1871, when the Constitution of the German Empire was adopted. The Second Reich had begun.

We join Karoline Moschel Schmidt on an early autumn day in 1876 in Webenheim in her house on the main street of the town which is called Hauptstraße. Karoline's house belongs to the family of her husband, Friedrich Schmidt. Karoline's father-in-law lives with them in the house as a widower. Even though the house is on the main street, it is not in the central area. The house where she grew up was directly in the center of town and just steps from the town church, schoolhouse, and a pub next door. This house has no space in front of the house because it resides on a main road from villages down the Blies Valley to the bigger town of Blieskastel just across the Blies River. The back of the house has a steep slope and thus no room is left for children to play or having a small garden. Karoline and Friedrich did have space for a garden across the main street. This is where we find the next generation of the Moschel family in 1876.

Karoline adjusted her skirt. It was getting just a bit too tight which meant she would soon have to begin wearing even more generous clothes to cover what would soon be her very ample tummy. After two pregnancies and two births she knew the landscape of how her body would change in the next few months. She put her hand on her stomach and felt a kick back as she did so. The unexpected response brought a smile to her face, and she wondered if that kick was a girl or a boy. After two boys, she hoped it would be a girl. If it was not, that was fine, but she really wanted a girl.

Today was not just an ordinary day because it was, Saturday, September 30, and the second birthday of her second child, Christian. Caroline decided over a week ago to make it a special day and invite her family for supper. Last year her parents surprised her by having a little party for Christian and the family and giving her something she never expected. Her parents decided on Christian's first birthday they would give her a gift. The symbolism of the gift still brought tears to her eyes.

Christian's birthday, you see, was also the same birth day as her deceased sister, Jacobina. If she had lived, on this September 30th Jacobina would have been 35. So, on Christian's first birthday, her parents and sister had decided to give her the only picture they had of Jacobina, namely the picture case sent from America a few years prior. Karoline was overwhelmed with the gift and said it was too early. They should keep it. The response was both firm and warm. No, it had been decided by her parents and sister that now was the time. Karoline should have the pictures and they thought it perfect to give it to her on Christian's first birthday. They told her it was up to her to decide who would next get the pictures, but for them the decision had been made. That was final.

Yes, it was final but it still left a tug in her heart whenever she thought of the gesture.

But now she must set the table. There would be 10 adults, and her two children. As she set the table, she thought of each person. Her mother and father and sister often ate with them. They lived just steps away, but tonight was more festive and an dessert added which Christian might not understand at age 2, but certainly would enjoy. They lived in the same house as her father-in- law, Georg, and as a widower he had much enjoyment of his two young grandsons. Her husband's mother's parents would come, the only living great grandparents of her two children. Also Friedrich's sister and husband would come, probably bringing something from their kitchen which was next door to her own kitchen.

As she finished setting the table, she thought of those she would have liked to invite. Among them were her brother Christian in Illinois, her sister Catherine in Illinois, and her husband's three sisters who were all in America. They had given much to America.

Karoline worried the most about her sister Catherine in Illinois. If she dwelled on how her sister was and what she was doing, it upset her terribly. She could not mention her sister much to her parents. They used to talk about it often, but as time wore on, they said less to each other. They worried about Catherine and knew they could do nothing, which in many ways was the worse part. What they knew about Catherine was not good, even beyond imagination at times. She was a patient in an asylum in Illinois. Both her child and her sister's Jacobina's children were being raised by their father. If only Catherine was closer. If only the children were closer. If only, sometimes she thought her life lived on "if only" as far as her family.

If only they all still lived in Webenheim. If only Jacobina had not died. If only she could know what America was like. If only she could see her brother and sister again. If only.....Karoline stopped her "if only" thought in mid stream. Today was Christian's birthday and that is who she would focus on today, not the "if only" thoughts.

The child Karoline was carrying was her only daughter who would live to adulthood. She was also named Karoline. Karoline was born on February 6, 1877, and would become 'our' Oma's Oma. Thus, the oral tradition started for the picture case, the knowledge of the houses the families lived in, and the history of the village and the families who lived there.

With all this talk of the picture case and discovering living Moschels relatives in Webenheim, I began to think someone stateside should check this all out. Jack was never hard to convince about a trip Germany. Ever since he had been called Doktor Herr Professor on a lecture tour of Germany in 1968, he took every chance he could to go back. Thus in late 2001 we started to scheme on another trip to Germany in June 2002. What would these relatives be like face-to-face was what I was pondering as the fall/winter rains came.

# 2002 Germany

As normal for us, a trip to the Continental always started in London. We left Eugene on May 29, 2002, and our first hotel in London, highly touted, did not work out well. We knew it was time to change hotels when, discussing whether to move, a light exploded in the room and glass went everywhere. We moved. We saw the Globe Theater and the Wobbly Wobbly Millennium Bridge for the first time and enjoyed company of long time English friends.

We realized quite early in our trip planning we would be in London for the 50th year celebration of the crowning of Queen Elizabeth II. This encouraged us to make hotel reservations early, thinking all would come for such an event. This was not the case as the locals who could afford it left town for the four-day holiday according to our cabbies and there were not overwhelming crowds. For the biggest part of the celebration the prediction was for one million people to watch the parade in London. We saw Prince William and Princess Anne in the motorcade and relished the streets were cleared and one could walk them without cars. June 6, D-Day, found us waking up to the news of Ronald Reagan's death and off to Gatwick Airport with a cab driver who was a fellow Fulbrighter and an immigrant from Afghanistan. By 6:05 p.m. we had arrived in Luxembourg, found the Hertz lot, and were on our way to Remich, Luxembourg, to stay at the Saint-Nicholas Hotel just across the street from the Moselle River which marked the border between Luxembourg and Germany. What a pretty little place. The restaurant of the hotel was filled that evening. It was clear the waitress was speaking in several languages to her various customers. When she got to us, I asked how many languages she spoke. The answer was four. Welcome to Europe.

The next morning, June 7, we were ready to leave this village by 11 a.m. and cross over to Germany. Outside of Orschlitz, Germany, we saw signs for the Dragon Teeth barriers of WWII. We drove on through to Einod, Germany, where Margaret Schantz Moschel was born and found no restaurant. Then on to Blieskastel, the town which now incorporated both Webenheim and Mimbach. It was now way beyond time to eat and we found a restaurant where we had a salad and what the owner said was, "a thing dropped from a chicken." My Rt. 66 background, which included raising chickens, told me this was an egg and the salad was very good, although a lot of garlic. We then went through many of the little villages I had been writing about: Mimbach, Bockweiler, Altheim and then to Hornbach and finally to our hotel destination, recommended by Markus, which was Hornbach Kloster. The monastery was founded in 737 and was now a luxury hotel and restaurant with the elements of old preserved and the best of new. It was absolutely gorgeous and each room elegantly designed in different international themes. By 3:30 I was ready to call Markus, whom I knew had excellent written English, but I was relieved after the phone call I could totally understand him. We made arrangements to get together at 6:00 in Webenheim, about 15 minutes away, at a pizza place near the Webenheim church. Our first meeting with Markus and his partner Christine was delightful and it was followed by going to his home and meeting his father and Markus giving me a legal document he had translated which

was about Margaret Schantz Moschel's legal affairs after her German departure. The document was dated September 4, 1865, and written in Peoria, Illinois, but sent to Germany to give legal power to a person in Webenheim to manage her affairs there. We returned to the Hornbach Kloster knowing the next day would be a big one in Webenheim.

June 8 started with lots of bells at 7 a.m. from the Hornbach church which was just meters away from the big window of our well-appointed room. The buffet breakfast had a beautiful array of things, including my favorite, birch muesli. We were off at 10:15 to meet Markus at the Webenheim church at 10:30. Markus had an elegant leather over-the-shoulder strapped satchel which had three large books with tons of yellow post-a-notes labeling each page he wanted to show us with old pictures contrasted with what we were seeing today. Each of the many family members we had been writing about came alive through seeing school and houses and places of work. Markus, probably being at least 10 inches taller than I, would open a page to a picture, tell the story of the context of the picture then and what we were seeing now. At my height the book was just right to zero in on the well rehearsed story he was telling. At one point I asked him, "have you practiced this?" Yes, was the very honest response, and it showed in the extremely knowledgeable trip of his small village and the history tied to our family. As Markus and I were trekking around Webenheim in our Birkenstock shoes, Jack was soaking it all in with great relish. The tour was over by noon, which gave Jack and I time to go get gas and flowers in Blieskastel and Markus was to go to his grandparents' house to help get lunch ready.

We were about to meet Oma, the oral historian of our family, and Opa who fought in WWII. This was an event and we all knew it. We arrived a little before expected time of 12:30, and we were all a bit nervous about meeting, and our early arrival added to that. None of us needed to worry. I learned later that Markus was in charge of getting the salad ready and evidently did not do the job to the satisfaction of either Oma or Christine. Yes, a little case of nerves for all of us.

The lunch, we had been told, would be a 'typical' Webenheim lunch. If this was typical, Webenheimers eat very well. Oma, 79, and Opa, 86, lived in a very pleasant home with a barn in back complete with a Massey Ferguson, circa 1950's, tractor in the shed and chickens and rabbits. I knew German farmers live in town and go out to their fields. At one time Opa had 81 parcels of land and then down to 12. It was very easy to envision my parents through these people. Their lives were much the same. The lunch had a first course of soup consisting of rice and grain, and then a course of boiled beef with a hot horseradish sauce. Potato dumplings, called snowballs, followed which we had written about as a specialty of the region which surrounded baked beef and salad. All conversation had to go through Markus as he was the only dual speaker. So when Markus was out of the room it was rather silent, not awkward, just waiting for our interpreter to return.

The highlight of this portion of the day was we were in the gute stube which I had knew was the good room that held THE PICTURE CASE. With a great amount of glee Markus presented the picture case, and I got to hold and touch it and see the four pictures we knew came from America and now an American Moschel was holding the picture case 150 years later. Markus, his father Gerhard, and I posed with the case.

After a most filling lunch Markus showed us the outer gardens and buildings where he had both played and worked as a young person. Markus, Jack, and I were off in Markus' little green FIAT to see another Moschel family house in Webenheim, just written about in our story, the family cemetery plots, and then out in the woods to see the remnants of the Siegfried Line from WWII in the woods. One bunker was huge with 5-8 feet thick walls of concrete and rebar. It stood under new growth in soft wood trees some 57 years after being blown to pieces. Jack took several pictures of Markus and I soberly looking at the remains of this monument to war and the lines of war. At 4 p.m. the entire family, which included Oma's sister and her husband, was to gather again at Markus and Christine's place for dessert.

Dessert meant cakes, and I was expecting our own konditorei experience after Markus sending pictures the prior year of birthday parties for family members. We were not disappointed. What an elegant and tasty array of sweets. Other family members gathered for this event and this included 8-year old Mareike, Markus' half sister, who presented me with a large picture book which we then settled in on a couch together to point at things. I would say the English, and she would give the German for the item. I gave Mareike a beanie baby, and Jack received a model Mercedes car from Gerhard, Markus' father, and then we all gathered around a table with the older generation, Markus being translator, and looked at picture albums of our family. There was Opa in his WWII uniform and Oma with her family during the period of evacuation in 1939. Then there was the picture of Opa's father in WWI. Markus had prepared a short two page document with family lineage of our two families, the ones who left and the ones who stayed, so his family could understand our relationship. He wrote it in both German and English under a label of 'The Family Reunion in Webenheim June 7-9, 2002.' Here is what Markus said in his English version for Jack and I.

"How wonderful is it to build a bridge between relatives, their faith and the history. This weekend, the descendants of a Webenheim family will meet again. With this meeting here in their homeland, we will bridge almost 150 years of separation. After 1853 when the first of the Moschels left Webenheim, almost a dozen of siblings, nephews, and nieces followed him in the New World. Separated through an ocean and two World Wars, the two family branches developed in different surroundings. By contrast we started last year, we became attentive of each other again and closed, after almost 150 years, the gap between our ancestors." Pictures were taken, and we drove back to our digs at the Abbey, arriving at 6 p.m., feeling that our world was much smaller and also larger at the same time and knowing Markus and Christine were coming soon to finish the day together.

They arrived at 7 p.m. and we ate in the bar of the Abbey. What followed were two more hours of pleasant conversation. They came to our room and then we explored the spa baths of this luxury accommodation. As Markus and Christine left, Markus made a big point of saying we should get together one more time before we left Germany, he even being willing to drive to Luxembourg where we would stay our last night before departure. They left and Jack and I concurred it was a remarkable, make that *remarkable*, day.

The next morning, June 9, the bells of the church were going at 6:30, a half hour earlier than the morning before, perhaps because it was Sunday, we did not know, but what we did know is one did not get to sleep in on a Sunday morning. Again down for the breakfast buffet and then we were joined by Rainer, our friend since 1995, whom we met in our 1997 Germany visit and a great two hour discussion ensued of his perception of Webenheim history and other issues of Europe and the world on which he was clearly well informed. We left the Abbey together, Rainer leading the way out in his car, and we following, and on to Rt. 6 and our paths diverged as we were off to Rothenberg, the ancient medieval walled city, listening ironically to Prairie Home Companion on the car radio. We knew the history of the medieval town and were ready to see it and to follow that with a day on the Romantic Road, probably the equivalent of driving Rt. 66 I had been told as far as importance.

As often happens in travel, idealized imagining of places and reality is often quite a different thing, particularly when Jack got a bad cold. I followed his lead on that one, and it was pouring down rain. We walked the ancient walled city with umbrellas trying to find cough drops and the next morning after a short stay on the Romantic Road, we veered back to the autobahn. The next few days of travel, though, were idyllic in Austria even though we were both managing colds and allergies. In our minds was getting back to Germany and, yes, making one more attempt to visit with Markus and Christine. On June 15 we were in Freiberg, Germany, and called the Hornbach Abbey and asked if they had accommodations for June 16. Yes they did and we booked.

Next I called Markus, but he was not there, and I made arrangements with Christine, the native German speaker who was also fluent in French, but had not studied English. Christine knew much more English than I knew German though, and we managed nicely arranging a meeting time. As we ended the call, Christine, whom both Jack and I were besotted by, responded, "I happy." With that we settled in to enjoy the day's adventures as we were happy as well.

We arrived back at Hornbach Abbey at 12:30 on the June 16 with an arrival fax from Markus and then we called him and arranged to get together at 6. The time together lasted until 9:30. Markus, as always full of enthusiasm, brought one more picture he wanted me to see. As Christine and Jack lingered over coffee, Markus took me to his car to see a large picture he had carefully covered with a towel. It had a large frame and he had taken the picture down from his grandmother's house. It was a picture of Markus' great grandfather in his WWI uniform. Markus, remembering I had said I wanted to see anything to help with the story we were writing on the internet, thought I might like to see this picture. It was a needlework with a picture of his great grandfather in uniform in the center. In needlepoint it said, 'God Please Bring My Husband Home From the War.' Markus and I decided his wife probably used this as an altar of sorts with the single white flower and fern that surrounded the picture. We were then back to finish the evening with Jack and Christine and said our goodbyes as both friends and family.

Jack and I went upstairs to our room to end the evening watching *Patton* on our TV with George C. Scott as Patton and Karl Malden as General Omar Bradley in dubbed German. No

English. No need for either of us. We had seen it several times. I knew the story well how Gen. Patton had liberated my uncle Don from German POW camp on April 29, 1945. Now 57 years later I had spent time in the city where his grandmother had been born and raised until she left with her mother, Margaret Schantz Moschel. Somehow it seemed to fit with everything else and an ironic, but appropriate, way to end our time here.

Next morning the bells went off at 6:30 and we left Hornbach Abbey at 9. We drove through both Mimbach and Webenheim and on to Rt. 8 to Luxembourg. The June 2002 Reunion was now history.

# 2013

I ♥ my Irish. That is on the neon sign at the nearest high school which I see when I go to the grocery store here in Eugene, Oregon. The high school is the *Home of the Fighting Irish* says their website. I consider that as I turn right into the grocery store across from the school and the neon sign has changed to the place and time of the next sporting event. I doubt if any American high school has a neon sign which states I ♥ my German or has a school slogan Home of the Fighting Germans. I have explored my German and Irish backgrounds and have come to understand both by visiting the homelands and writing about my ancestors. Ironically, in both countries I found living relatives on the land/village where my ancestors left in the 1860's.

What started in my mind as a project in 1995 to understand my middle name of Margaret has expanded beyond anything I would have imagined, this ebook being the latest iteration of the exploration of one's roots and what that might mean about yourself and your life. Our original Moschel research team put a lot of words on the internet, much more than are in this ebook, and we took the story through WWI. Then Markus and I took the story through WWII, viewing the experience from both sides of the Atlantic and our families' involvement in the war. The result of that was a 300-page story which we shared with family. Perhaps, in time, it might become an ebook.

We ended the stories of this ebook in 2002. What has happened since then? Markus married Christine in 2003, and they had a daughter, Helena, in August 2005. Markus met Jack and I in London in 2004, and Markus and I toured the Imperial War Museum together going through the exhibits of both WWI and WWII and shaking hands in front of fighter jets and in front of a piece of the Berlin Wall which is in front of the Museum. It was after that experience we zeroed in on writing about WWII 60 years later. Greg continued with his thorough Moschel research and shared the results with his siblings. Jack died in 2010, and I have used some of my time since then doing what Jack and I would have been doing together, which is keeping on top of technology and writing. This will be the 6th ebook produced since September 2011 and we are nearing 10,000 downloads for those ebooks.

Have my views changed on Germans and Germany? All I can report is my experience. I would never say I am an expert on Germany, but I have done my fair share of reading and research of Germany through the ages. In my 18-year experience with this project every encounter I had with a German was positive to very positive. All wanted to help me in the process of what I was seeking to find and none wanted to hide anything about the past. Thus, I was left with admiration of the people I worked with and the family I met along the way. It has been a worthy pursuit and I am glad I am named Theresa **Margaret**.

# Publisher's Note

As publisher and lead author, I want to thank a few people instrumental in this project. The motivation to write the story of the long history of the Moschels in Mimbach and Webenheim occurred when an email arrived on November 10, 1995, from Dr. Bernd Gölzer who was a member of the board of the Saarland genealogical society and the author of a book on families of Mimbach and Webenheim before 1700. I ordered his book which was of great assistance in understanding our Moschel families.

Rainer Kreten went way beyond what one needed to do when there was a call for help by me on a German bulletin board in 1995 trying to find German relatives near where he lived. He became a friend and the person who first sent pictures of the Mimbach church in 1996. It was a pleasure to meet him twice in Germany and to keep up an almost 20-year relationship on email.

Horst Weingard is the archivist in Webenheim. He assisted in understanding the history of Webenheim.

Elly Hess, my double cousin, was much involved in the web-based version of this story. She supplied background knowledge of her branch of the family and though we did not expand on the story of Jacobina Moschel Sandmeyer for this version of the story, Elly's support, encouragement, and enthusiasm kept us going during our long period of research and writing.

The Chenoa Historical Society and the Chenoa Centennial Committee of 1954 published books of the history of the Chenoa, Illinois. The Gage Historical Society and the Beatrice Public Library provided material for the Beatrice, Nebraska, area. The Peoria, Illinois, public library provided a large file of material regarding the early Germans living in that area.

And once again, Mike VanDeWalker has made an effective ebook cover from a picture Jack took on June 8, 2002, with his new digital camera.

I have six large-ring notebooks filled with emails back and forth to Markus in Germany. With each email we understood the joint family story more clearly and stepped closer in relationship in many ways. Greg took known facts, sometimes very minuscule, and searched until he had fuller explanations of events to present to the rest of us.

Our longer version of this story is available at: [http://www.thinkpint.com/ripleyroots/mosch\\_stories.html](http://www.thinkpint.com/ripleyroots/mosch_stories.html)

Theresa Ripley, 2013