Joseph Heydinger
son of John Adam
1830-1851
First Heydinger to
die in USA in NW

SINCE 1916

HEYDINGER Newsletter

Vol. XCIX, No. 4

Elizabeth Heydinger
daughter of John Adam
1832 - 1855 in NW

Alsace Trip Update

Interest in the trip abroad in the spring of 2016 is growing almost weekly. To date we have 18 firmly committed, with half of them already signed up and beginning the "installment plan" payment system with the Passports company. We are approximately twelve months out from the time when the final payments are due, so consider that if you are waiting.

As we have been mentioning all along, it is not too late to sign up and go. Several folks from around the country have expressed an interest but still have a few reservations - and they are not all about the money involved. Recent worldwide terror events have caused a few wobbly knees, and that's understandable. But the sense we get is that as the date draws closer, and if the political situation settles down abroad, more will definitely sign on. We welcome all, at any time!!!!

However, if you ARE one of these late-comers or late deciders and are seriously thinking about it, be sure that you have all your paperwork done in advance so there is no disment at the last minute. Make sure you have your passport up to date. They are advising if you have one, check its expiration date, and that prudent travelers these days make sure the expiration date is at least six months AFTER one's expected return. Why? Who knows - maybe that's how long some are held hostage? Oops, I didn't write that. In the months to come, we will be publishing a list of other documents that you should also have before leaving.

Finally, if you are thinking about making the trip and have questions, please email them to us, and we will try to get you the information promptly.

Face Book Page Update

Deb Maliszeski, one of our younger cousins from the Cleveland area, has taken time out of her college schedule to set up a FaceBook page for the family. If you are into that kind of social media, you really need to visit the site. As of this writing, there are 77 likes, which indicates quite a bit of traffic on the site already. And what a site it is! The conversations and the connections being made there are terrific already. To paraphrase one of the signs posted there - Family is not just important; it's everything! And this site truly is bringing out the younger members of the family and starting the conversation that we hope will turn into attendance at the reunion in the summer of 2016.

What is especially gratifying to see is the number of people going up to introduce themselves and the branch of the family from which they hale. The pictures are also fantastic, so KEEP ON POSTING! It's neat to see mug shots from back during WWII and even further back. The number of young families showing up there is also edifying, to know that this great family continues to thrive and multiply.

So our thanks go out to Deb for initiating this great way to get the message out to the family members and hopefully build toward a great reunion. Keep it up all! And keep on returning occasionally to see what's new.

Get ii this way:
Facebook (Like Us) - https://www.facebook.com/Heydinger-Family
Twitter (Follow Us) - https://twitter.com/HeydingerFamily

Genealogy Update

Genealogy work is like a glacier. It will weigh a person down, grind at the fool who always looks backwards in time, and does this so slowly that one hardly notices the time passing.

Now that's a nice way of saying nothing has changed in our research. Except that a Texas cousin phoned to relate that a number of years back he had made a trip abroad and stopped in at the Merlebach area, hoping to find a church or something where there might be family records. Upon asking a young lady passing by the train station if she spoke English, he soon discovered that not only was she fluent, she knew exactly where the church was but sadly informed him that all the graveyard was gone and records were no longer kept there. All that way for the bad news!

But in the next breath she asked him to follow her and led him up the steps of the town hall building. Turns out her father, a former mayor of the town, still maintained an office in the building and was privy to the collection of original record books. He shared them and made a happy Heydinger. That's the good news.

The bad news is that those records right now don't know where they are. Seems that a certain garage is packed full of boxes yet, and only slowly will the correct box be discovered - told you genealogy was glacial! When unearthed, the contents will be shared, both here and up on line at Facebook. So stay tuned.

Cook Book News

Nothing new cooking on the Heydinger cook book scene. Hopefully that means this is still the research and development stage of the project. Keep on looking for those old time recipes, and go ahead and try them out once again. The offers still goes - on the dessert side, if anyone needs an unbiased person for quality assurance, you have our email! We can make house calls.

Satisfaction Survey

In our last edition, we promised that a survey would be forthcoming to gain your opinion as to what is being planned so far and possibly obtain other suggestions as to how to improve the reunion experience for all attendees.

The questionaire is printed on the next page and is easy to fill out and return. If you want, you can highlight the entire page, save it to another file, print, fill out and mail in to Mike Heydinger PO Box 112 Huron OH 44839. We appreciate your being candid. Please feed us some other activities that you think would make a Heydinger Reunion a most memorable occasion for all.

Or how about this? You can fill in the form right on line. Simply go to the upper right hand corner of the Newsletter PDF form that you are reading now and click on the tab Fill & Sign. A pull down box will appear where you can indicate whether you want to insert text or a check mark. Click on whatever you want to do, go to the appropriate space on the form and perform the command. If you accidentally mark something wrong, delete it and start over. The only downside is that for each check mark or comment, you would have to click back onto the pull-down box and get the command again. That will be corrected in Reader XII version.

To email the form back after filling it out, go to the top bar again to the Comment tab this time and in the pull down menu find the Extract Command. Click, then indicate what the page number of the form is that you want pulled out of the entire Newsletter and it will do so. Give that form a new name, save it, and bingo! Done! Just email that new file to either Gretchen or me then. And congratulate yourself as a frugal Heydinger - you just saved yourself about a buck!

To perform this on-line fill-in task, you will need Adobe Reader XI. This is available as a FREE download by going to http://www.adobe.com/products/reader.html. You do NOT have to buy the Reader XI PRO version to make this work. Install this software - it's safe - and you are all set to handle ANY fillable forms you receive on-line.

Heydinger Reunion Satisfaction Survey

As a Reunion Consumer, your attitude toward past Heydinger Family Reunions, The Big Ones. Is being sought. Please help us out as we continue the planning process to make this Centennial Reunion the greatest.

Name: _____ (optional)

Family Branch: (Circle one) Peter, Frank, John, Adam, Bernard, August, Charles

To the best of your knowledge, how many John Heydinger five-year reunions have you attended. _____

If you attended any in this century, then you are familiar with the format used for the past three reunions: basically a two day affair, with golf and cards on Saturday AM, Mass and dancing in the late afternoon and evening. Sunday is the big meal at noon with the family meeting thereafter and the family auction, games for the kids, and various other minor contests throughout the day. Family history displays are set up each day as well.

Our intention right now is to include a third day, Friday, as a family fun day out at Auburn Lake Park, where families can bring kids to swim, fish or ride paddle boats all afternoon, then enjoy a hog roast and square dance in the evening, followed by a fireworks display. Are you satisfied with this basic three-day format or not? We also want to know what can be done to improve the reunion experience for all attendees. (See bottom for that.)

So help us out here:

I am satisfied with the two-day format of the past. Yes _____ No _____

I would or would not participate in the third day's activities, a Friday, if it were offered. (circle one)

I (and the family) would probably attend the following: (Indicate HOW MANY you think would participate in each.)

Friday afternoon Family swimming, paddle boats, fishing _____ Euchre contest _____

Hog Roast _____ (how many for the supper) Square dancing at pavilion _____

I would stay for some fireworks (probably after nine PM weather permitting) Yes ____ No ____

We could provide a responsible teen to help out part-time for life guarding service _____

Saturday: AM Golf Scramble _____ Euchre _____ Scavenger Hunt _____ Geo-caching _____

PM Mass at North Auburn _____ Dance at NA School _____

Sunday: Dinner at noon _____ Family Photo _____ Family meeting _____
Kiddie games _____ Family Auction _____ I would be willing to bring something to be auctioned off _____ I have wine to enter in the tasting contest _____

I will be contributing something to the family cookbook by December 1, 2015 Yes ____ No _____

I will bring some sort of visual display of our branch of the family to set up and display _____

Here are other suggestions for family activities or for generally improving the family's experience over the 3 days:

(Copy and mail this in or fill it out and email it to us as an attachment at mheydinger@huronhs.com or gschelleng@yahoo.com)

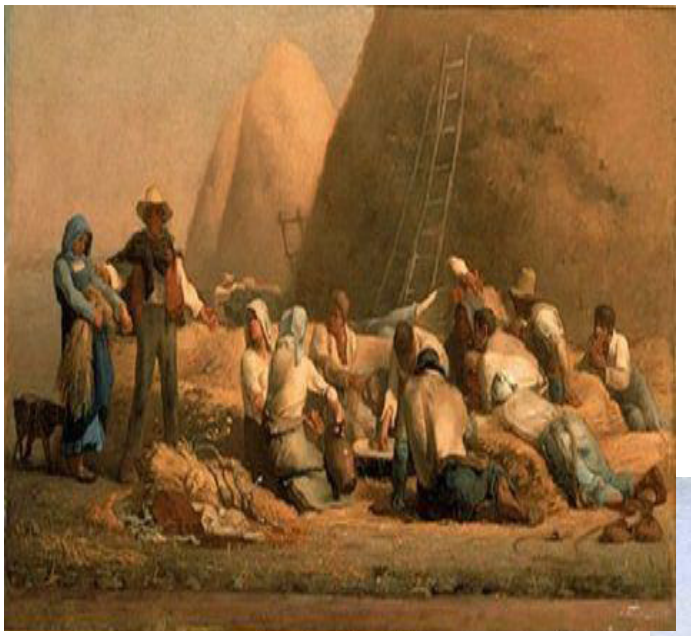
Why Did John Adam Heydinger Wait So Long to Emigrate?

In a previous issues, we reviewed much about the Heydinger family ancestors: we explored John Adam Heydinger's possible employment may have been; we explored every hamlet, village, and town where early Heydingers may have lived: and we asked you consider what the connection might be between John Adam Heydinger's being a weaver, his decision to emigrate, the State of Alabama, and Karl Marx. In this issue we shall attempt to connect some more dots.

At the turn of the 19th century in France, the area around Lorraine, the section of the nation from which our ancestors haled, people were attempting to wrest an existence from several sources. There was farming, of course, where the land was not suited for large scale tilling because of the rocky nature of the soil. Much of the land, therefore, was held as meadows for grazing. Farmers kept mostly cattle, fewer sheep, and a goat or two. Some swine were also raised. Small plots could be cleared of rocks and then plowed for grain crops such as wheat and barley or for the planting of vineyards, if one had south-sloping hills sides. Another favorite side crop was growing hops, which every Heydinger knows is essential to good tasting beer. For a time even, hemp was grown, the fibers of which were used for making burlap bags and ropes, and finally madder wort, a plant used for dying the cloth that was woven.

Jean-Francois Millet's *Grazing in the Vosges*, a mountain range that extended in the north from near Merlebach to the south almost o Switzerland. As one can see, the terrain was similar to that of Appalachia in south eastern Ohio, a gentle rolling land, rocky in nature so that stone walls were easy to build to retain the cattle. Homesteads were often isolated, such as the one shown in Millet's scene here.

The amount of each crop grown and animals raised depended upon prices for meat. High meat demand meant more grazing on meadow lands and more fallow crop lands. Why work to plow when a few good cattle could yield as much per acre per year? Meat demand, however, waxed and waned like a crazy moon, so it was tough to schedule planting in the spring only to learn that meat was now in high demand by harvest time. And remember, a wheat or barley field had to be scythed by hand, stacked, and then transported for hand threshing. Better to let the animals graze.



Harvesters Resting or *Break Time at the Stacks,* as reapers and wagoners rest from the afternoon heat. Small bundles of grain were hand-sickled, bound and stacked, then gathered by wagons to larger stacks awaiting final threshing of grain. Men and women worked the fields together, sharing labor from farm to farm, ensuring that everyone was able to harvest on time. In America, this would evolve into what was called threshing time, when all farmers within a small area would follow a threshing machine from farm to farm at harvest time. All families fed the threshers a mighty meal! Here it seems quite simple. Notice the new mother and proud dad at the left showing off another mouth to feed.

This is what France looked like during the Famine of 1832 and then again in 1840. Every kernel of wheat picked up contributed toward one more loaf of bread for a family, another day of survival until the next crop could come in.

A more honest picture of their lives at that time would include these grim factors: farm families were always one good rainfall away from losing their crop – either too little for the growing grain or too much for drying hay. They were also subject to diseases that could wipe out a family or a village in a season. They lived at a time when every married woman bore on average nine to twelve children, only half of whom reached adulthood. Their farms were mercilessly assaulted from many sides: wild animals, wolves especially, could decimate a flock or herd ; the tax collectors were always inspecting barns, larders, pens, and stacks – even measuring the height of manure piles - to gauge the true extent of a family's prosperity for purposes of extracting more taxes. And worst of all, an armed cavalry at any time could drive their horses, wagons, and following cannons through their crops, destroying their season's work in an afternoon or single bivouac – all without compensation. In fact, ancient Salic law forced peasants to support marauding armies.

Furthermore, for all the advances in agriculture, Europe had really made little headway against famine and away from mere subsistence farming. Records show that the yield per acre of wheat, for example, averaged only thirty bushels from 1800 – 1840, but after 1840 actually dropped several bushels per acre. Indeed, most farmers were forced, during the winter months, to adopt a second trade or craft in order to earn a little more wherewithal to support all the mouths around the table. Hence John Adam's adopting the trade of his father, weaving.

So when we today say "olden" days, keep in mind that the term then meant living a way of life that had persisted much the same way as it had for centuries, from deep in the Medieval era, not because people wanted to but because they HAD to. The rule of life was that there was to be no change, no movement – either upward or laterally in society – because God's will was for all to accept their lot, live out their lives in simple holiness, and earn an eternal reward. It's easy to see how ANY external change forced upon a community could affect a man's thinking about staying in a locale or leaving a situation in order to save his family.

We cannot be sure that John Adam raised much grain, and we are less sure of whether he had vineyards. However, judging from the winemaking abilities of the Heydingers once they touched upon America's shores, we suspect that he did have more than a passing knowledge of how to transform fruits to potable beverages. Throw in some dandelion blossoms for free, and he may have had quite an assortment of casks in his basement.

But here is what we do know about his area of Lorraine, stretching from about Metz on the west, over to Strasbourg on the east, and south to the Vosges Mountains: there was much cultivation of flax used for the linen making industry. Flax was also found useful in making paper for which there was increasing demand. Book publishing was exploding around Europe at this time, and in addition to straw as a source of fibers for making paper, flax was preferred as it yielded a whiter paper than the yellowish straw could.

This small patch of flax could produce enough finished fiber to produce a nice shirt or skirt, or pair of leggings. Sometimes it was also used as the warp material in weaving, with cotton as the woof, to produce a hybrid which was less coarse and itchy and much stronger than the cotton. The practice also stretch supplies of each material.

Flax, however, was another labor intensive crop, though it served large families well. Indeed, one quarter of an acre of flax in production could clothe the largest family! The plant had to be gathered from either cultivated fields or from the wild, then the long stems stripped of leaves and seeds, then softened by soaking, then split apart so the fibers could be separated, and from there a short road to spinning and final weaving and dying. The seed were also collected, pressed and used to make linseed oil. Truly the plant deserved its Latin name, *lineum usitatissimum*, the VERY useful linen plant. All the way back to the time of Charlemagne the government even helped the farmers by decreeing that the cloth made from the fibers was preferable because it was healthier, as was the oil for cooking.

This fourteenth century folio piece illustrates the cutting and sewing of the linen in a lord's home. Definitely not a one-woman operation.

Flax harvesting in France. This painting shows how labor intensive the practice was. A small, curved, hand-held sickle was used in one hand while the other held the tops of the plants. The fibers are tough enough that an ordinary scythe will not work.

If you want to test your linen harvesting abilities and then weaving, you can find the flax growing wild along almost any unmowed highway in America. It's that pretty little blue flower that begins blooming about June and lasts right through summer – unless the local highway department decides it is too beautiful, might cause a distraction to a driver, and thus mows it. The American version rarely exceeds two feet in height, but the fibers are still strong, almost three times stronger than cotton. Thread count is a different matter, though, with the old style flaxen linens more coarse than cotton. The fabric would also crease, meaning that it gradually became less desirable for clothing, as newer materials such as cotton became available.

So the question is this: if John Adam were a weaver, was he weaving linen from the flax or something else. We suspect that he may have begun weaving flax. Why so? Because his father, Pierre, who died in 1811, was a weaver, and flax was the primary fiber used up until that time. Cotton did not grow in the Alsace-Lorraine regions. It could have been imported from Egypt, but the Egyptians were, well, being Egyptian about it, and interested in serving only their own needs. Very little Egyptian cotton was exported. Indeed, it took several persons all day long removing the seeds from the cotton bolls by hand to harvest approximately one pound of the lint needed for spinning and weaving. That's not a lot of lint, but the amount harvested could easily be spun and woven into cloth around a cottager's fire in the middle of winter – if her could obtain it in Alsace-Lorraine.

John Adam courted Catherine, then decided to marry in 1827. So what was happening then, and why had he moved from Kerbach, where three generations of Heydingers had lived, to Merlebach? We can only speculate, but the theory goes something like this.

John Adam's father Pierre was the youngest of three sons. According to the laws of the time, his father's farm would have been divided three ways into smaller plots, the average being about 6 - 7 hectares. (1 acre = .40 hectare) Now it comes time for John Adam to marry, and what size farm plot would he have had from his father? Try raising a family on three hectares. So there is a good probability that John Adam purchased his Merlebach property before his marriage to Catherine. Without land, he HAD to move to town.

A model of an early spinning jenny used throughout Great Britain and the continent. This device was an improvement on the traditional spinning wheels that it seems every home had in the eighteenth century. The first ones were powered by a walking horse, but then with the advent of mills along streams and later steam engines, these little machines would revolutionize the spinning of fibers into a yarn or thread that could then be woven on a loom into cloth.

And they were relatively cheap, too. A family could

As luck would have it, John Adam came of age and was married just at the time when the weaving industry was beginning to form in the Merlebach area. The bad news is that at exactly the same time, the entire country entered an economic crisis that lasted until the spring of 1832. More fuel was thrown on the fire when smallpox and cholera epidemics also struck in 1827. What a time to marry! Now John could have chosen to emigrate instead at that time, but he did not. Thousands of his fellow countrymen were doing so, bound for America and what she promised. So why stay? His oldest son was only five, and he had two other children, Joseph and Elizabeth, under the age of three. An ocean voyage would not have been good on the family. So he waited and continued to farm and work on the side. The cottage industries of weaving were flourishing in the 1840's in France and the Luxembourg areas. Cheap wool from America via England was flooding the area and found ready hands to spin, then weave material on small family owned looms. John Adam may have owned one of these had he been a flax weaver first.

Life was not particularly good for cottage weavers. Whole villages were engaged n the occupation. Merchants then bought the goods for resale in the larger tailoring cities. But despite the concept of weaving guilds with their apprentices and journeymen, weavers were basically at the mercy of the merchants. Smart merchants - the Kaufman - could not reduce the prices paid for the weavers finished goods or else a general strike would have occurred. Instead, on an individual basis they tried to enforce fines for things such as short weight, goods too coarsely woven (Imagine the difference today between 60 and 200 tpi cotton Sears sheets!), or for tardiness in delivery of goods. Haggling took place at every step of a sale. John Adam thus became very shrewd in his dealings. He may have experienced the weavers' strikes in 1832 and again in 1848, when just about everyone in France went on strike.

These were the typical upright looms found all over Europe in the cottage industries of the early nineteenth century. They were usually hand made and could easily be disassembled to create space for other household activities. Usually the weaver, a man, worked upstairs in a well lighted attic while his wife attended to the spinning downstairs and the final finishing of the cloth the man made. One man working for a week at such a loom could turn out about twelve yards of finished woven cloth. What the family did not need for its own use was put up for sale at the market.

Finally, then, a greater revolution occurred, somewhat akin to what Henry Ford did in America with his automobile factories. He sucked farm boys from the land to the cities by the thousands, eager for higher wages at easier work, but at the expense of sometimes dehumanizing working and living conditions. The beginnings of industrialization were also stirring in the Alsace.

Primitive loom factories had begun to be developed in major urban areas that attracted French farm boy hands to operate. The standard size cottage loom could produce a six foot wide bolt of cloth and could easily fit into a cabin room and be dismantled to turn the same room into a dining room or sleeping quarters. We can picture John Adam bent over his loom in the light of the short winter days. But then large buildings were constructed, usually at the edge of a village and on the local waterway. The individual home looms were moved to the buildings and were powered by a mechanical steam powered engine. Human hands were still required, many of them, so the huddling of the masses began in these villages. Lads and even lasses who had grown up in the fresh air sacrificed their adolescence on the altar of these loom rooms, and voila! The modern factory system was born. We don't know whether John Adam entered into servitude

in one of these establishments or whether he continued a little longer in his home. His patience, though, had been thoroughly tested by 1850.

But another curious thing was happening – actually three of them – Alabama, Georgia, and Mississippi. These American states, with the advantage of free labor in the form of institutionalized slavery, began in earnest at the beginning of the nineteenth century to raise cotton on huge Southern plantations. If you have watched the *Roots* saga, then you can understand how an entire economy depended upon King Cotton. And how labor intensive the process was. And how a simple mechanical invention – the cotton gin - sped up the processing but also fueled the need for more slaves. Plantations grew as did the demand for cotton – and a line of ships stretched from Africa back to Charleston or Savannah or Mobile.

So what was this thing that sped up and deepened the South's dependency upon cotton and slavery? The cotton gin was a small wooden contraption of wires and gears and handles, through which raw cotton bolls could be run to separate the fibers from the cotton seeds. When Eli Whitney patented this machine in 1794, cotton production was meager in America. In fact, many growers were in the process of abandoning cotton, as maintaining the slaves was more costly that what the plantation owners made on the sale of cotton. In 1790, only 1,500 pounds were harvested in the entire United States! That was a lot of sore fingers for then. By 1800, only 35,000 pounds were harvested, but by 1815, as the gin caught on, that number rose to 100,000 pounds and by 1848 to 1 million pounds. Picture huge plantations, fields of pickers, Savannah's warehouses and docks piled high with bales, and ships bound for . . . where? Who was using all this "stuff"?

At first, the excess cotton was shipped north to the New England states where much cheap water-power on all sorts of streams could power the mills that processed the raw cotton fibers into finished and colorful cloth. There were no cotton mills in New England until after 1789 when the colonies "stole" the technology from the Mother Country and thus went solo. It was slow going for a while. Thus much of the Southern cotton was actually shipped to England, to the great mill towns of Manchester and Birmingham. There the advanced technology could successfully undercut the product made in America, and the whole cloth was shipped back to America for handy profits.

But as more mills were constructed in America and more cotton raised, a problem arose. England was shipping cotton in from some of her other colonies, notable India. So competition with American cotton drove prices down. Growers then turned to other places to sell the cotton, and lo! Right there in Lorraine was a ready-made population, already skilled in weaving, ready for new jobs. By "new," figure jobs such as carding the fibers, then spinning it into the weavable threads, then working the weaving looms. Industrialization was hitting Lorraine, and the Heydingers were in the midst of it all.

So back up a bit, to when John Adam was just knee high. Born in 1797, two years before George Washington died, and fourteen years before his own father passed away, John Adam was probably living like any other child in the area. There were no schools, so the only education he received would have been at his mother's knee. From his farther he would have learned farming skills – animal husbandry, planting the small cottage garden, perhaps learning to plow and harrow, maybe even how to safely wield a scythe at harvest time. Other associated skills would have to be mastered as well – how to cut and split the firewood for heating and cooking, how to work raw wood into something useful, how to repair ordinary wooden objects needed for survival, perhaps even carpentry skills needed to build and furnish a home. We know that John Adam possessed these skills from how he tackled the American wilderness in the small farm lands he purchased upon his arrival in America. He fared as well as or better than any others who settled in the New Washington-North Auburn area in the 1850's and passed those skills on to his own son John, and thence to the nine boys John raised.

Picture John Adam in those early days then, as he moved effortlessly from helping around the farm until his dad died, then to weaving on the side as a cottage industry. He answered to no one but himself, owned his own loom, punched no clock, took a break with the wife and kids when he felt like it, and produced the cloth to clothe his family and maybe sell a little on the side. Imagine the pride, his sense of independence. He and thousands like him all over France and Germany were the middle class of his era. Below them were those engaged entirely in farming, away from any urban areas, only slightly improved in station since serfdom days several centuries earlier. At least even the lowest of society were free men, though, but without education or any other trade, forever trapped at the bottom of society. Those like John Adam who lived even in hamlets and villages like Merlebach, as long as they had a trade,

such as weaving or nail making or wood working on the side, they could earn and maybe put away a few francs. That possession of a few gold coins made all the difference between lower and middle class citizens.

Mills such as this sprung up all over Lorraine and the Merlebach area, wherever a fast flowing stream with a little head could be found. Later, steam power would free the mills from a river side. Now dozens of workers, mostly women and children, spent their days inside toiling for someone else, The machinery freed them from the hard task of turning the weft and pulling it tight. In turn, this put their men out of work.

Within one generation the making of fabric totally upset the social fabric all over Europe.

But then came the mills, small at first, then growing into behemoths that dominated and totally upset the fabric of life the villagers had known for centuries. The upper classes in the larger cities had been able to amass large amounts of money. They didn't need the money for their daily survival, though. Many became bankers and loaned out their money to amass even more francs. Others looked at the middle classes that surrounded them to see what it was that they most desired to spend their meager francs on. They then set about to meet those needs by investing in mills (factories), steam power machinery, and methods of distributing what the mills produced. Thus was born capitalism and venture capitalists. Unfortunately, John Adam did not fit this mold.

Inside the mills, rows of iron machines clattered all day long as the overhead belt driven machines never slowed down, took a day off, com0plained about the heat. Perhaps the women did, but too much complaining and they could be replaced.

As steam engines were imported into France for power, the lands in the Saar region just north of Merlebach were torn up for coal to power the machines. Women and children, some as young as six, were employed in the mills, with the women's wages undercutting those of their husbands. Mr. Mom was thus invented. Even the church steeple was fitted with a clock, visible throughout the village. The cottagers may have been too poor for their own clocks, but perched atop a church, a clock gained the authority of God, and people obeyed its call to work – on time! Within a single generation, life in rural France in the area of Lorraine was transformed. Gone was the independence enjoyed by living on the land, working on no particular schedule, producing as much or as little as one wanted to, in order to earn enough money to meet the family's simple needs.

We don't know when or how John Adam was pressed into this life-style, nor do we know the degree to which he and the family succumbed. We do know that John Adam and Catherine fell into the same pattern as other married couples during this time period – the number of children dropped from approximately nine per couple to a little over five. Was it that fewer hands were needed on the farms or that wages were too low to support a family? Perhaps both. John Adam and Catherine produced five children who lived.

What we do know is that just north of Merlebach and the Saar region of Germany on the other side of the border, was situated a German town called Trier. Here in 1818 was born a lad who grew up in the area and observed first-

hand what was happening up and down the Rhine valley, from Strasbourg and northward. From this vantage point, he studied in several universities, became radicalized against the then-existing establishment which was largely monarchical and feudalistic, and managed to get himself expelled from several European continent countries. What he observed, as his study of philosophy and history evolved, was that the new phenomenon of money, or capital, was changing fundamental human nature. Whereas humans had previously produced what they needed for themselves and had an identity and sense of self-worth in proportion to what they could produce, under this new system, mankind was being reduced to a commodity to be bought and sold, to a materialistic object defined only what it could purchase, not create itself, and thus less human than in previous ages. Karl Marx was his name, and a return to valuing the common social good over all else was his game.

Marx never published anything that John Adam could have read, at least before he emigrated to the States. He didn't have to read it – he was living each chapter. After his father died in 1811, John Adam needed to turn more to weaving. He delayed marrying until the age of thirty, actually almost five years before his older sister Susanna married at age 38! Both of these marriages were totally out of character with the norm for the generation before and after John Adam's. Something was going on in the country to contribute to this delayed marriage and smaller family syndrome. It was a revolution, a turning on its head of generations of life styles that had been the bedrock of French and German society. The ability to earn money was being sold at the expense of one's freedom. What Marx had observed happening in Germany, France, and later in England must have been what John Adam was experiencing inside. He saw ancestral lands being torn up, felt the daily rhythm of family and village life changing, saw the pursuit of capital as man's main goal in life, in short, saw himself and his family becoming dehumanized. For above all else, Marxism, at all stages of its development, was describing a materialistic philosophy. The Heydingers were nothing if not intensely spiritual. The internal conflict could not have been any stronger. What to do? How to escape?

The social revolution at that time was very much akin to what America is experiencing today. Picture the *Happy Days* images of America's glorious '50's. Most Americans back then were poor but didn't know it. They had homes, clothing on their backs, schools for the kids, a job that kept their noses just above the high water mark, a car in their garage, and a growing savings account. Then rock and roll hit, the Pill, all sorts of liberalizing tendencies in the country, and a war that few outside of political circles understood. By the time the '90's rolled around, most Americans had traded their happier days for bigger homes, with closets full of fancier clothing, kids going to college better paying jobs, two and three cars in the garage, and 401k's and pension plans galore. In short, America, too, was trading its soul for creature comforts.

And then the bad times hit in this century, with jobs in short supply, savings accounts dwindling, homes foreclosed on, ten year old cars sitting undriven in the driveway for want of gas or repairs, fewer vacations, and college educated grads living in the basement of their parents' homes or cohabitating with a significant other because no one can afford to get married until much later in life. John Adam would have understood perfectly what is happening in America today. He lived it as well. And he survived!

About that time, in the late 1840's, the motive, means, and method provided themselves for John Adam and tens of thousands of like-minded men to escape this dilemma. About this time, as America's South was experiencing a need for more markets for its cotton and as cotton was being shipped directly from the ports of Savannah and New Orleans to LeHavre, ship captains had a problem. Their ship holds were loaded with cotton bales from America to Europe, but dead heading back to America with empty cargo holds, thus costing them money. They could make two trips per year across the ocean, and were desirous of finding ways to reduce their losses.

The solution was simple. They sent employees to the hinterlands of Europe, mostly to France and Germany because these were the most crowded areas, and tried to sell the populace upon the idea of emigrating to America. They produced tracts and pamphlets illustrating the glories of life in America, the freedoms found there, the free or cheap lands available, the opportunities for growth and upward mobility and FREEDOM. It was the same con-game that back in the 1620's had brought English settlers to the colonies, with the land speculators then producing the tracts and making their money on commissions for every person emigrating. We all know about lost colonies in America in those earlier centuries – probably falling victim to attacks by the natives. In the 1840's those fears were long over, as most of the Native Americans east of the Mississippi had been subdued. Ohio especially was offering free or low-cost land to settlers. John Adam seems to have bit.

He would have had no problem in disposing of whatever properties he owned in Merlebach. Population pressure after the Napoleonic Wars was such that among the farming communities all over the area, the division of lands that had occurred with each new generation had reduced the size of the farms to barely sustainable levels for even a single family, in most case to between twenty to thirty acres. People stood in line to buy these small holdings of those who had decided to emigrate in order to increase the size of their own holdings and thus better survive.

All John Adam had to do now was get his family safely to LaHavre in northern France and find a ship to transport them to a new beginning. While the salesmen were hooking the French farmers and reeling them in to LeHavre, the

ships' captains were totally outfitting the empty holds of their ships. They installed two levels of decking below the main deck and divided them up into small cubicles, each large enough to house a family of half a dozen while crossing the ocean. Then for a fee, the farmers could bring their belongings – all that they could carry in a single chest (wonder if there were fees for a second bag?) – bring on their own food supplies for a thirty to forty day trip, and then set sail at the first opportune wind.

So the circle was now complete, from the cotton picking fields of Alabama, to the impressive social changes taking place in the Lorraine area, to calls by the likes of a Marx to retain one's sense of freedom, dignity and worth by escaping, to the holds of cargo ships returning to cotton fields of the South. John Adam and the Heydingers were riding the crest of a wave of emigration that occurred in two spurts and bringing new blood, life, and vitality to a young country that craved their spirit. Fleeing France and captivity by Spinning Jennys and weaving mills did not place the Heydingers among those lessening the need for slavery in the States, nor did it make them wealthy. Only the Civil War in America would end slavery, and only years of education in America by descendants of John Adam and Catherine would make Heydingers prosperous and rise higher into the middle class. But without that indomitable spirit that John Adam possessed and his bravery in trading the security of Merlebach for the great unknown of Ohio, where would we, his descendants, be today? It is said that only the Church herself can declare a proper feast day. But what are they going to us if we declare our own as a family? Excommunicate us? Really? So next October 3, which this year happens to be a Saturday, attend your weekend services and celebrate the feast of John Adam Heydinger to whom we owe so much.

May his spirit continue to energize and enervate us today as we face our own challenges here in America. In his own way in his time, John Adam had experienced the growing inequality of life between the upper and lower classes in society, had seen the 1% of his time trampling upon the lower classes, had seen how families were being torn apart because the two wage earner family had become the norm, saw labor being outsourced, realized how nature was starting to be despoiled for industrial purposes, and felt the pressures upon the once sacred religious beliefs that his family has cherished for centuries. And he did something about it.

In the next issue we shall investigate HOW John Adam and his family escaped.

You may email anything to either Gretchen Shellenger at gschelleng@yahoo.com

or to Mike Heydinger at MHeydinger@HuronHS.com

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