



HISTORICAL NOTES

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EDWARD CARL, SURVIVOR OF THE CIVIL WAR

by Jerry Abitz

Headlined in an obituary in the *Kewaunee Enterprise* in 1924, “*Death Claims Last Civil War Veteran in City*,” was that of Edward Carl. I became intrigued with this individual after our president and collector of many early newspaper articles, Tom Schuller, emailed me an article about Carl’s experiences that appeared in a much earlier newspaper. I went to the Kewaunee Library where Linda Vogel, a former KCHS director, found his obituary.

Edward Carl left his native Germany with his parents and settled in Chicago during the opening days of the Civil War. While there, he was recruited into the army with Company C, 24th Illinois Volunteer Infantry Regiment. He served out his entire enlistment, despite being wounded twice, and returned home to Chicago.

He moved to Kewaunee, and was employed in the surrounding woods. While here, he met the prominent local politician and businessman, Edward Decker. Upon receiving a payment of \$900, he served as a substitute for Decker by filling his position in the draft; subsequently, Carl went back to the military, and served until the end of the war. (Yes, anyone could be hired to take your place in the draft; the going rate seems to have been somewhere between \$200-\$300.)

Carl returned to Kewaunee where he married a local girl, Mary Wattawa; together, they had a son (who settled in Chicago as an adult). He worked for a saw-mill company in the summers, and in the logging woods in the winter; he then was employed by Fred Bronckhurst’s Northwestern Mills in Kewaunee. His final place of employment was the Nuhlicek Brewery. He served as sexton at Holy Rosary Catholic Parish, and was city marshal for a number of years. He played a prominent role in the local veterans group, and appeared at all of the Memorial Day observances.

Upon his death, all the flags in the city flew at half-mast, and a squad of soldiers served as pallbearers. The following article [*reprinted here with permission from the Gannett Corp.*] tells about his experiences.



Edward Carl, Civil War veteran.
Photo courtesy of Kewaunee Enterprise [Oct. 24, 1924].

STORIES OF THE CIVIL WAR *Kewaunee Enterprise*, January 10, 1908

“Walking among us everyday, unpretentious, and occupying humble positions in life, are men who have played parts in the great drama of the civil war. Now and then they fall out of the ranks and are soon forgotten. Each one of these humble heroes has a story of his own, more interesting than written books. The Enterprise will occasionally try and catch some of the memories which now come to them — history which those who come after us will eagerly read.

“Among these surviving veterans in Kewaunee is Edward Carl, who, for many years, has been the sexton and bell ringer of the Catholic Church. Mr. Carl enlisted in the early days of 1861 in the 24th Illinois, a German regiment having for its colonel, Hecker, the noted German revolutionist, of '48, a compatriot with Carl Schurz. Mr. Carl says of him: ‘Hecker was a strict disciplinarian. He was good enough to us privates, but was rough on his regimental officers. He continually quarreled with these officers, and finally resigned because of their disputes. He was

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(cont. on page 2)

succeeded as colonel by a Hungarian officer. I recall an incident. The regiment was on its way to the front, and we were traveling by rail from Cairo [Illinois] to a camp on the other side of Cincinnati. The railroad ride from Cairo had been a long, hungry and dry one and, when he arrived at the depot at Cincinnati, officers and men made a break from the cars for the nearest eating house or saloon. Hecker saw the stampede and ordered the depot gates to be closed. The officers were the loudest in their protests and, being encouraged by their talk and men in the ranks, soon took up the quarrel and all were loud in their demands to get out. It promised a riot, but Hecker drew his sword and, brandishing it around his head, shouted in German, 'You damned good-for-nothing hounds, get back to the cars or I'll cut your heads off.' We obeyed sullenly. An hour afterwards we arrived at our camp outside of the city where a good warm supper awaited us. While we were eating, Hecker went about among the tables, slapping us heartily on the shoulders and saying, 'Well, boys, isn't this all right?' Soon after, he left the regiment and we did not see him again until long afterwards. When we were in Alabama, he visited our camp one afternoon. He was then colonel of the 82nd Illinois.

"Our first active service was in the spring of 1862 when we took part in Mitchell's raid through Kentucky, Tennessee, and a short distance into Alabama. We crossed the line into 'Dixie' at Louisville and were surprised to meet with almost an ovation. Men, women and children waved flags and offered us food and tobacco. When we camped in a public square, beer wagons drove up and dumped off kegs of beer sent us as a present. A little further south our reception was not so hospitable.

"We had several skirmishes, but the first real battle we got into was at Perryville, where Buell checked Bragg's advance to capture Louisville, Oct. 8, 1862. The 1st and 21st Wisconsin were in our brigade and General John C. Starkweather of Milwaukee was our brigade commander. Our regiment was posted in a little woods, and there we lost a great many men. I received a gunshot wound in the shoulder. I actually saw [bodies piled] three feet high, where they had been mown down in the ranks. My own personal experience there was confined to what I could see immediately around me. A comrade and myself were left in an exposed position by the regiment falling back without notice. Here I was, wounded. It didn't hurt much at first, but in later years it proved troublesome. My comrade and I started back to join our regiment, but the colonel of the 126th Ohio who had come up with his command and occupied the old position of the 24th, stopped us and ordered us into his firing line. We told him we belonged to another command, but he drew his sword and threatened to cut us down. I pointed to my bleeding shoulder and leveled my gun at him whereupon he rode off. We rejoined our regiment, which lay a few feet in the rear of its old line.

"We subsequently took part in the battles of Murfreesboro, Stone River, and Chickamauga. It was at Murfreesboro that I witnessed the first and only military execution I ever saw. One of the men had been convicted by court martial of desertion, and was sentenced to be shot. As an object lesson, the entire army corps were assembled to witness the execution. The corps was in a hollow square. In the center was an open grave with a coffin placed near it. The doomed man was marched by a squad around the entire front of the troops assembled, something like a mile, with the drums beating the dead march. He was finally placed at the coffin so that when he fell his body would fall into the box. Twelve men were in the firing squad. An officer loaded the guns and only six of the guns contained bullets, so that the men in the squad would not know who fired a fatal shot. He fell into the coffin and was hastily buried. I had at this time become accustomed to some of the horrors of war, but I never wish to witness another such scene.

"We were with Thomas at Chickamauga. On the afternoon of the last day of the battle the rebels had nearly surrounded our brigade, and had bent and twisted our line so that the brigade was in the shape of a horseshoe and we were fighting stubbornly, when General Starkweather rode up and in a stentorian voice—he had a voice like a lion's roar—shouted, 'Hell, the 24th is fighting yet! 24th Illinois fall back to the line!' And so we gave up the field and marched dejectedly to Chattanooga, which we reached that night. The battle had been lost to us.

"We went with Sherman as far as Dallas [Georgia] on his march to the sea, when our three years' time was up and we were sent back home. I subsequently enlisted as a substitute in the 16th Wisconsin, but joined the regiment in Virginia and never fired a gun while a member of it, as the war was nearly at an end."



Monument to those who served our country during the Civil War, located on the grounds of the Kewaunee County Courthouse. Photo by Jerry Abitz.

OLGA SANDERSON, ACTIVIST

by Jerry Abitz

A most unusual lady is Olga Sanderson. I consider her a true friend, yet she has never seen me. She has been blind since the age of 20 as a result of a bout with scarlet fever while working in Chicago. She has achieved a lot in her lifetime for she is a doer. She is not content to sit in a rocking chair nor pity herself for what life has dealt her.

I first met her in 1973 when I became a director of the KCHS. She was the force behind the then-president. She made out the agenda for the meetings, and was very knowledgeable about the dynamics of the organization.

She had a vision for this group that no one else had. For the first 40+ years of its existence, the KCHS was pretty much a moribund group with several spurts of activities. She even had been asked by a county board chairman, back in 1969, "Olga, why do you want to resurrect this dead man with a concrete slab on his chest? You'll never be able to resurrect the Kewaunee County Historical Society. You're wasting your time!" But Olga never gave up. Looking at the KCHS and its accomplishments today vindicates what she has always strived for.

One of the first projects she worked on was the formation of a group who worked diligently to turn the abandoned Kewaunee County Jail and Sheriff's Quarters on Courthouse Square into a museum.



Olga Sanderson at her typewriter. *Photo by Glenn Sanderson.*

She was an idea person, and knew how to recruit people.

Once the museum was up and running, she participated in collecting money to finance a special project. The KCHS had no funds, so it was vital to raise this money. To do

this, every bank in the county was contacted and asked to contribute to the fund. It took some cajoling, but they raised in excess of \$1,500.

Sanderson recruited her teenage son, Glenn, to do the photography. (Glenn, today, is a professional photographer in Green Bay.) The KCHS collected old-time photographs, copied them for a photo album, and returned the originals to the owners. It was a massive undertaking for which they won an Award of Merit from the Wisconsin Historical Society in 1973. While the original is kept at the History Center, copies of the album were placed in the two libraries in Algoma and Kewaunee, where they remain today; copies were also placed in the Bank of Luxemburg and the Bank of Casco, communities in which there was no library, but have been returned. Little did they know that this small start would be the beginning of a collection now numbering close to 30,000 photographs!

Another project in which she was heavily involved in the 1970s was recording people and their stories on audiotapes. (Those 60 or so tapes are on file at the Algoma Library.) Some were originally recorded on reel-to-reel tapes; since that is now an antiquated system and the players are no longer available, the KCHS had them transcribed and burned onto CDs. She also contacted a professor at UWGB to ask him to write a history of Kewaunee County. However, that deal fell through when he was denied access to the Decker Papers, a collection of artifacts and documents willed to Kewaunee County around 1910 by the founder of the county.

In later years, after the death of her husband, Dewey Sanderson, she moved to Green Bay where she now lives in a condo in the Schmitt Park area with her son, Glenn. Olga and I would talk from time to time on the telephone. She was busy writing plays for a local group of actors who performed in nursing homes. That is not an oxymoron, for she recorded on tape and they would be transcribed into scripts. She was a busy lady. When asked if any are copyrighted, her reply was that about 120 are so protected.

She loved to hear of the successes of the KCHS. She would suggest ideas for future projects, people who should be interviewed on VCR tapes, or, in some cases, make phone calls to people she knew for information to share with me. Even as I interviewed her, she was full of ideas the KCHS should pursue.

She may be frail at age 90, and health problems occupy more of her life. But, despite all this, she still is our number one booster!

CZECH RESEARCH: A PRIMER

by Richard L. Dorner

Many immigrant families who settled in the Luxemburg area had their roots in the state of Bohemia in the Austrian-Hungarian Empire. In this article, I will present a process to follow in trying to uncover family histories now buried in the State District Archives in Plzen, Bohemia, Czech Republic.

One can no longer write to the archives requesting information as I could in 2000. Now the approach is to acquire the services of a private professional researcher, or you personally could go to Plzen (Pilsen) and pursue your own studies. If you intend to do your own research, you will need to travel and contend with various languages which probably will include Czech, German and Latin. The archives have their own rules and guidelines. It would be best to contact the archive and predetermine the dos and don'ts that will apply to your visit. Please note, you can write to any of the archives in the Czech Republic in English; however, they will always respond with correspondence in the Czech language. If needed, a Czech translation service can also be found on the internet.

In order to overcome language and travel issues and consuming personal time, I would recommend finding a researcher on the internet. I had the good fortune of having a cousin who supplied the name of an excellent researcher, who lives in Prague and travels to the various Czech archives. I worked with this person for a long period of time and developed a greater understanding of research techniques and procedures. Based on this exposure, I'm sharing with you data that may help you to do some of your own Czech research.




Former Hammern Church Cemetery located in Bohemia, Czech Republic [2004] — The grave markers were removed after the expulsion of the German-Bohemians left the country. The Czech/Bavarian border is on the horizon. *Photo by R. L. Dorner.*

1. When you make contact with a researcher, there are a number of questions to be considered. The most important would be the issues of fees and charges. You need to find out what services are offered by the researcher and find out his/her fees for the work they will perform. Good questions you should ask are: Do you translate the documents into English and how complete is the document translation? How long might it take to receive data? What is your history as a researcher, experience, and your areas of focus? There are archive fees which are minimal per day. These costs will be included in the overall service charge by the researcher.


2. You as a client will set a price limit. This is entirely up to you. If you want to find the birth record for an immigrant ancestor and their home town only, this probably would be the least expensive and it would be the establishing of a record. Knowing as much data about the ancestor is most helpful: birth date, town or region, other close family relatives such as parents and siblings. This will enable the researcher to begin and verify an immigrant's roots. All of this data is really helpful as NOT all records have survived, and it may take some time to locate the data. The professional researcher will also know the towns and villages that may have existed over time.

There are records of when applications were made to travel to America. However, not all immigrants applied for these travel papers. It is possible to find their home areas through this search also. The



**THIS ISSUE'S
GUEST AUTHORS...**

Richard L. Dorner (*see page 4*) — A lifelong resident of Montpelier Township in Kewaunee County, Richard has been delving into his family history for many years. It took six years to gather the info on the European connection of the Dorner family through the Plzen Archives (Bohemia, Cz). He wanted to share what he has learned, hoping that it might inspire others to do the same. Richard has a B.A. in English, History, and German from St. Norbert College (De Pere, WI). Research into his family history has given him "a chance to reapply what I learned from my years of study."



initial step is to pinpoint where the immigrant lived in order to build a database.

3. Records after 1750 (in general) tend to list three generations of information. For example on a birth/baptismal record you will find the child, parents and grandparents. The dates of birth and baptism, if different, are given. The names of the priest performing the baptism and the godparents are given. Even the mid-wife is listed. Sometimes there is a very detailed history of the family. They will specifically say the towns and house numbers where ancestors lived, i.e., county, district. Records have house numbers which were established in 1770 in Bohemia. These numbers help trace families over many generations. They also appear on land records and aid to more in-depth research. Examples: Dorner 66, Glaser 63, Stahl 1.

4. Records closer to the 1700 timeframe tend to have a single source connection. They may list the child and parents only. These older records are not as detailed as the more modern records after 1750. In order to make positive linkage, it may be necessary to search existing tax records as well as land ownership records in conjunction with church records. Please bear in mind that these records are generally written in old handwritten German script which even modern German speakers find it hard to decipher.

5. The church records served two functions. First they were church documents to keep track of the members of a particular faith community. Second, they served as legal documents like our vital records such as birth, death, and marriage found in courthouse records. These records are found in the Archives in Plzen for Western Bohemia. The land records for the Hammern, Eisenstraß and Seewiesen are found in the Land Archives in Klatovy/Klattau, which is linked with Plzen. They have detailed information on particular farms and ownership dating back to 1837. Land register books that show land transfers are also in Klatovy.

6. The tax records are mainly located in the Central Archives in Prague. An example is the Berni Rulla (1654). This is the first national Czech tax assessment record. There are more recent tax records from the early 1700s also. Since the researcher I was working with lived in Prague, it was easier for him to locate these records. The original land maps for Bohemia (1837) are located in the Central Archives also. A researcher can acquire a land map copy of a specific farm from this archive, provided the ancestor was a landowner.

7. With the assistance of a professional researcher, it is possible to build a more and complete picture of your ancestor's family history. Church, land and tax records provide clues to build a verified, historically accurate record of a family's history. Research is really the tying together of many clues to make a story. Research can be what you want to make it. You can make it as basic or as involved as you wish. Research always takes time. Clues can be found in many different sources. When enough data has been collected, a picture of life in centuries past can be created. I hope this data will help you take a step into your ancestors lives whether they were Germans living on the borders in Bohemia, or they were their Czech neighbor.



Hammern Church [2004] — Restored between 1993 and 2003, members of the Dorner family were baptized in this church. Hammern church records (1798-1901) are on microfilm at the SDA in Plzen, Bohemia, Czech Republic. Photo by R. L. Dorner.

NEWS FROM THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Report from the Trenches

by Jerry Abitz

Annual Meeting

The 2010 Annual Meeting was held in the West Kewaunee Town Hall on Saturday, April 10; sixty people were in attendance. The meeting opened with a PowerPoint presentation by KCHS Director Don Honnef, a resident of this town. Highlights of his presentation included many photos from the KCHS collection; prominently displayed were photographs of the schools, cheese factories, farm harvesting photos, steam engines, saw mills, blacksmith shops, and churches.

A question-and-answer period followed with people sharing personal histories, location of various sites, and odd bits of information. It is this collective memory that adds to the richness of how we record history.

Elections took place, and all of the incumbents were reelected (*see complete listing on page 8*). A luncheon followed, prepared and/or served by Directors Julie Bloor, Mary Reckelberg, and Marilyn Schleis.

If all goes according to plans, the 2011 annual meeting will take place in the Town of Red River next spring. I plan to prepare a PowerPoint presentation for the occasion, and hope to enlist historian Joyce Lampereur in this endeavor.

Jail Museum

The Museum has been used for storage space while cleaning or drying artifacts from the fire in our storage area at the Union State Bank basement. Once inventoried, they were removed to a rental storage unit or to the storage area in Don Honnef's barn. The Museum has been cleaned and new displays have been mounted.

The doors opened for the season on Memorial Day weekend. Staffing is accomplished with volunteers organized by Virginia Kostka. It is open from noon until 4:00 p.m., seven days a week, through Labor Day weekend.

Seeing the historic Svoboda wood carvings that are part of our heritage, George Washington's plan for Mount Vernon, the John Jay letters written while he served in the Second Continental Congress, the Edward Decker artifacts, or the various artifacts of daily living from the past will fascinate you. It will also make you aware that we are not exactly a cultural backwater.

History Center

The recently renamed center [formerly KCHS Research Center] at 219 Steele Street in Algoma is staffed by a team of volunteers headed by Bevan Laird on Friday afternoons from 12:30 to 3:30 p.m.

Mark Von Photo Giveaway

The Mark Von Photo Giveaway will be held on Saturday, July 10, from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m., and again on Monday, July 12, beginning at 1:00 p.m., at the Kewaunee Public Library on Juneau Street in Kewaunee. (*For questions during the giveaway, call 920-388-5015.*)

Harmann Photo of Algoma donated all of the photos that Mark Von had taken while he was a photographer in Kewaunee. This amounts to approximately 12,000 photos! Volunteers have gone through the collection, and have retained those needed for our files. The rest will be given away only to the persons in the photos.

*To defray expenses,
a donation has been suggested
but is not mandatory.*

Website Update

John Gales of Green Bay has been hired to redo the KCHS website. The present website (at www.rootsweb.com/~wikchs) is not being maintained as Tom Duescher, our former webmaster, resigned.

Miscellaneous Information

QUESTION RE KEWAUNEE SHIPS — In the "U.S.S. Pueblo" story in April's issue, I mentioned that the ships produced at the Kewaunee shipyards reached the ocean via the Great Lakes, the New York State Barge Canal, and the Hudson River. I received an email questioning whether they used the same route as used by the submarines produced in the Manitowoc Shipyards (those vessels traveled into the Chicago River, the Chicago Sanitary and Ship Canal,

the Illinois River, and the Mississippi). That may very well be true for boats from Kewaunee. I did ask this question of Tom Schuller whose father-in-law was in charge of the Kewaunee yards at the time, but Schuller did not know.

STATUS RE GHOST PARISH [SEE "MISSION OF THE GOOD SHEPHERD," APRIL 2010] — I have had no success in determining the original location of the ghost parish, the Vilatte St. Joseph's Mission in the Walhain area in the Town of Luxemburg. I had been contacted by a friend and historian, Duane Ebert of the Brown County Historical Society, about Father Vilatte. He had material he had collected as well as an article on Father Vilatte [written by Ebert] that will become part of the KCHS collection at the History Center in Algoma. PattySue Powell has donated a book on Father Vilatte that also will be added to our collection (*as soon as I finish reading it!*).

A source from the Green Bay Catholic Diocese mentions this mission and stated its site was registered under Father Vilatte's name. Another source mentions this mission was in Walhain, Brown County. The county line is only one mile to the west. Although I've checked the tract indexes in Kewaunee County and did not find his name, I still need to investigate the Brown County records.

Cletus Bellin questioned whether it might have evolved into the French Spiritualist Church whose cemetery is in that area. He also questioned the names of those Walhain parishioners. Those names, according to him, are Duvall names, a place about ten miles to the northwest where, according to one

source, there was a Vilatte Church with about 225 worshippers.

Jail Museum Investigated

The group, SOS Investigated [Green Bay] recently spent more than four hours investigating the Jail Museum for paranormal activities. Tom Schuller anticipates a report in the near future.


Fox Cities Paranormal of Appleton held an event on Saturday, June 19, at the Kewaunee Inn, the new name for the Karsten Hotel, which included a dinner and a program. A portion of the proceeds went to support the KCHS.

GO GREEN!! HELP KCHS SAVE \$\$\$!! GO GREEN!!

Inbox...? or Mailbox...?

We want to continue to use all of our resources wisely, including the dollars you give so generously. Each one can help reduce costs to produce the newsletters — paper, printing, and postage — by opting to receive the KCHS *Historical Notes* in your Inbox.

It's easy to sign up! Just email your request to Susan (skслиk@centurytel.net); you'll receive the next issue in your Inbox.



GO GREEN!! HELP KCHS SAVE \$\$\$!! GO GREEN!!

Friends of the Kewaunee County Historical Society

~~ 2010 Fund Drive ~~

As I type this list, it is so gratifying to see names of individuals I know, am related to, or with whom I have done business. Despite the economic turndown, you still come through with donations. Those of you who have sent emails regarding our newsletter and your appreciation for what we are doing make it all worthwhile. As a not-for-profit group, friends, such as you, help to keep us afloat financially.

Note: The listing below is based upon donations received March 1 through June 1.
 If yours has not been listed and was received at a later date, it will be acknowledged in the next issue.
 If your name is not listed and you gave, please contact the editor (gabitz@centurytel.net).

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(cont. on page 8)

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(cont. from page 7)

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