

# IMMIGRANT CASE STUDY

Peter Heinrich Bastert Family

by Ann Laemmlen Lewis

## The Bastert and Lübker Families

On the afternoon of 12 May 1812, widower Friedrich Wilhelm Bastert of Ummeln married Anna Maria Ilsabein Uthhoff of Isselhorst in the canton of Brackwede, Westfalen, Germany. Friedrich was thirty-one years old, the son of Caspar Heinrich Bastert and Ilsabein Rütters. Anna Maria

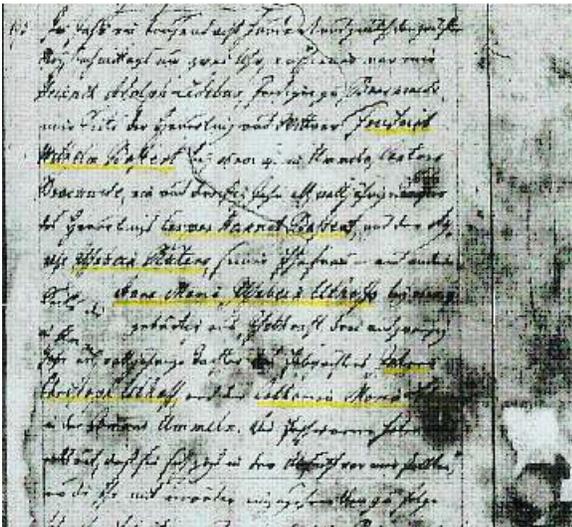


Figure a: Marriage of Friedrich Wilhelm Bastert and Anna Maria Ilsabein Uthhoff, 1812

was twenty-three years old, the daughter of Johann Christoph Uthhoff and Catharine Maria Lohmann of Ummeln. As they stood before the preacher, he read the proclamations and the Napoleonic Code with a “clear and audible voice” pronouncing them man and wife.<sup>1</sup>

Both Friedrich and his father were *Heuerleute*. The *Heuerleute* were dependent tenants or renters working tiny land plots in the peasant class of Germany in that day.<sup>2</sup> The word *Heuerling* has no real equivalent in English, though perhaps “tenant farmer,” or “sharecropper” comes closest both as an occasional description and a class distinction. A *Heuerling* normally owned neither house nor land, but rented a cottage that was often a converted outbuilding or even a barn on the landowner’s

property. Rent was paid off through work on the farm. Contracts were made every four years for plots of land no larger than two to three acres. For this, in addition to a small cash rent, he was usually subject to service to the *Colon* (landowner). A *Heuerling* either worked a fixed number of days, usually without pay, or more commonly, whenever called upon, for a low wage. Under these conditions, it was often next to impossible to subsist without other sources of income. Many families in this area grew flax, and earned a little extra from spinning, weaving, and dyeing in the home.<sup>3</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup>Zivilstandsregister 1810-1814, Brackwede Standesamt, Marriage Record, microfilm no. 1, 050,780, FHL, Salt Lake City, Utah.

<sup>2</sup>Ernest Thode, *German-English Genealogical Dictionary*, 4<sup>th</sup> ed. (Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Co., 2000), 10.

<sup>3</sup>Walter D. Kamphoefner, *The Westphalians: From Germany to Missouri* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press 1987), 4, 18.

Peter Heinrich Bastert was born on Wednesday, 10 April 1833, at 7:00 a.m.,<sup>4</sup> and was christened on 14 April at the Evangelische Kirche (Lutheran Church) in Brackwede.<sup>5</sup> He was the youngest of nine children. His parents lived in the village of Ummeln until about 1820, then moved three miles away to Isselhort, where the last four children (including Peter) were born. In that era, it was uncommon to move a family. This confirms that they were not landowners.



Figure b: Evangelische Kirche Brackwede

Three years later, not far from Ummeln, in the village of Quelle, Hanne Caroline Lübker was born on 25 October 1836.<sup>6</sup> Caroline also came from a family of nine. She was the second child. Her parents were Johann Friedrich Wilhelm Lübker and Anne Margarethe Luise Kothhoff.<sup>7</sup> The Lübker family came from Quelle, and the Kothhoff family from Steinhagen. Quelle lies on the outskirts of Brackwede, and Steinhagen about four miles away.

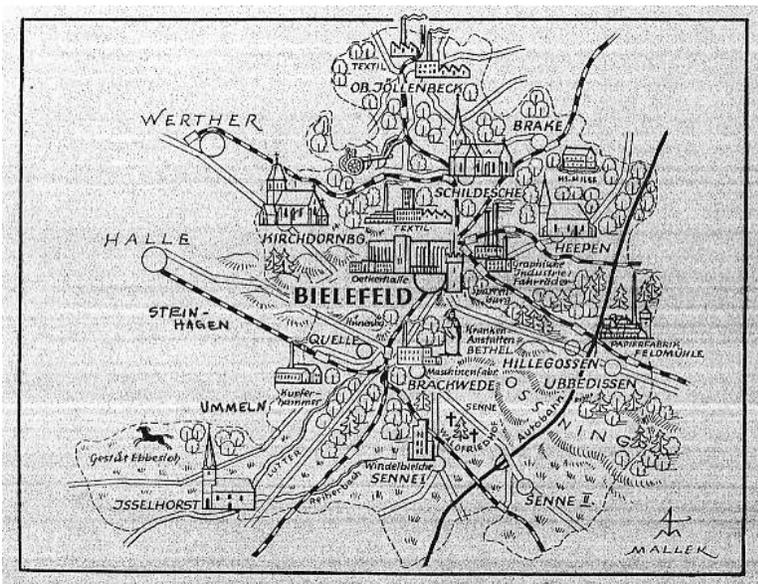


Figure c: Map of Bielefeld and surrounding towns where Basterts lived

In 1912, Ummeln was a rural government district with a population of 1,776 people.<sup>8</sup> Isselhorst had even fewer people, with 1,517 inhabitants.<sup>9</sup> The Bastert children had many relatives living in the area. Inhabitants of these villages attended church

<sup>4</sup>Kirchenbuch 1712-1959, Evangelische Kirche Brackwede, Birth Record, microfilm no. 582265, Family History Library, Salt Lake City, Utah.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup>E. Utrecht, Compiler, *Meyers Orts- und Verkehrs-Lexikon des Deutschen Reichs*, (Meyer's Gazetteer and Directory of the German Empire) (Leipzig: Bibliographisches Institut, 1912-1913), 2:989.

<sup>9</sup>Ibid., 1:882.

nearby at the Evangelische Kirche in Brackwede,<sup>10</sup> (Ummeln is about three miles from Brackwede, and Isselhorst about six miles.).

### **The Place Called “Westphalia”**

All of these small villages in Westphalia are in the Kreis (county) of Bielefeld. The land of Westphalia has had a history that is difficult to track. From 1180 to 1803 it was settled by the Saxons which used the name of Duchy of Westphalia. In 1807 Napoleon formed a new state called the Kingdom of Westphalia that stretched all the way to the Elbe River. He wanted Westphalia to set a model of enlightened French government in order to attract the sympathies of the neighboring German states, including Prussia.<sup>11</sup> When Napoleon was defeated in 1815, this area was part of the Kingdom of Prussia and it was named the province of Westphalia. When the German Empire came to an end in 1918, Westphalia was once again its own state. Today the area of Westphalia is about 130 miles from north to south and about the same from east to west. This province is bordered by the Rhineland on the southwest, Hesse-Nassau on the east, and Brunswick, Lippe, and Hannover on the north.<sup>12</sup>



Figure d: Area of Westphalia

### **Emigration to America**

Emigrants to America originating from the Prussian province of Westphalia came primarily from the lower rural classes. By 1850 more than half of the population in some Westphalian areas belonged to the *Heuerling* class.<sup>13</sup> The landowners had to support an increasing number of tenant farmers, which often meant decreasing the size of the farm plots. This must have put a strain on all members of this agrarian community.

---

<sup>10</sup>Kirchenbuch 1712-1959, Evangelische Kirche Brackwede, Birth Records, microfilm no. 582265, 582291, 582316, 582317, Family History Library, Salt Lake City, Utah.

<sup>11</sup> Hajo Holborn, *A History of Modern Germany 1648-1840* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1964), 2:387.

<sup>12</sup> Wendy K. Uncapher, *Lands of the German Empire and Before* (Janesville, WI: Origins, 2000), 65-66.

<sup>13</sup>W. H. Hildedieck, *Geschichte der Familie Hilgedieck* (Onsabrück: W. H. Hildedieck, 1995), 34.

Living conditions must have been hard, and supporting a large family could be extremely challenging. Often it was very difficult for large families to provide adequate food to support themselves. For centuries, the inhabitants of Westphalia had earned their living by farming and producing flax. But in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the beginning of industrialism brought some major transitions. When the Spinning Jenny was invented in England, hand-spinners began a hopeless battle with machine thread. In addition, cotton began taking the place of linen. This, coupled with the successive bad harvest years of 1845-48, led to a food shortage of exceptional proportions.<sup>14</sup>

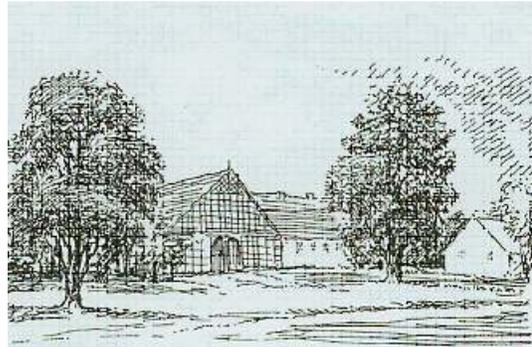


Figure e: Landowner dwelling with Heuerling cottage near by in Westphalia

These years of bad harvests, coupled with the decline of the linen industry, led to disastrous mass unemployment in Westphalia. Chroniclers speak of the worst famine ever known, of misery among spinners and an excess of beggars. At one house in nearby Herford, 250 beggars were counted at the door on one single morning in 1847.<sup>15</sup>

Perhaps these conditions contributed to the emigration, from time to time, of members of the extended Bastert family. Heinrich Christoph (Henry), an older brother to Peter, married Anna Margareta Louise Steinbeck in 1843 and emigrated to America in 1848 at age 31.<sup>16</sup>

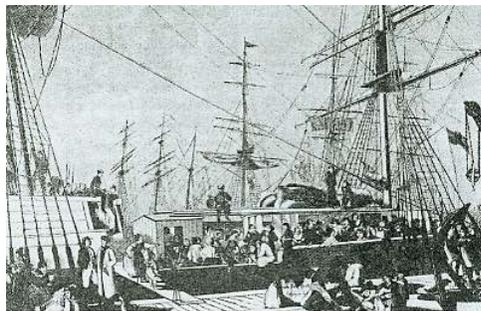


Figure f: The port in Bremen, 1866

For many emigrants, the decision to leave home and seek their fortune in America began with an exhausting and dangerous voyage filled with adventure. Bremen was the port nearest the Bastert's home. Up until 1840, the journey was taken by river barge on the Weser or by cart. In 1843 ships began transporting emigrants, and then in 1847 came a major improvement: the railway from Minden to Hannover and from Wünstorf to Bremen. Now it was possible to reach Bremen in a few hours.<sup>17</sup>

---

<sup>14</sup>*Let's Go To America: the path of emigrants from Eastern Westphalia to the USA* (Germany: Hermann Brackmann KG, Löhne), p. 12.

<sup>15</sup>Ibid.

<sup>16</sup>Passenger Immigration Lists Index 1500-1900, St. Louis Genealogical Society Quarterly (March 1970), 3:1.

<sup>17</sup>*Let's Go To America: the path of emigrants from Eastern Westphalia to the USA* (Germany: Hermann Brackmann KG, Löhne), p. 18.

It is possible that Peter also followed this route when he emigrated in 1854,<sup>18</sup> and Caroline in 1855.<sup>19</sup> In 1854, a peak year, 215,000 Germans emigrated to America..<sup>20</sup>

In a fascinating diary written by a German immigrant named Hans Hoth, who also sailed to America in 1854, we learn that the fare from Hamburg to New Orleans was 38 Prussian Taler, and 32 Taler for children<sup>21</sup>. The price of a horse at that time was 120 Taler. In wages, a weaver would earn 2.4 Taler in a week, a seamstress .4 Taler in one day.<sup>22</sup> It would have taken substantial savings for a *Heuerling* to afford passage to America.

When Hoth purchased tickets for his family, he imagined that the ship would be outfitted to carry emigrants, but it turned out to be a freighter, and the emigrants were not treated any better than ordinary freight or ballast.<sup>23</sup> He describes very uncomfortable living conditions filled with much sickness and many deaths. The trans-Atlantic journey for Hans Hoth took 58 days.<sup>24</sup>

Other emigrants describe similar uncomfortable living conditions. Passenger lists often included 150-200 people. In 1850 the legally prescribed minimum height for the steerage deck was five feet six inches. Each passenger had the right to twelve square feet of space. Berths were set up so that about half of the available space remained free. A berth was shared by four to six individuals. Adults received a width space of seventeen inches, children under the age of ten, half that. Each individual was to provide his own mattress and blankets. Sanitary arrangements

---

<sup>18</sup>Wolfgang Bockhorst, *Beiträge Zur Westfälischen Familienforschung* (Westfalen Emigration), (Aschendorff Münster, 1889-1990), 47/48:324 #9302.

<sup>19</sup>Caroline Bastert entry, Quincy, Adams County Death Register 1814-1915, microfilm no. 1,870,158, Family History Library, Salt Lake City, Utah. Note: calculated: 60 years in State, 60 years in Country.

<sup>20</sup>Shirley J.Reimer, *The German Research Companion* (Sacramento, CA: Lorelei Press, 2000), 95.

<sup>21</sup>Hans Peter Emanuel Hoth, Diary, translated by Peter Gulbrandsen (Bancroft Library, University of California Berkley). Also online:  
[Http://www.utlm.ort/onlinebooks/hothdiary\\_part1.htm](http://www.utlm.ort/onlinebooks/hothdiary_part1.htm).

<sup>22</sup>Elke Pies, *Löhne und Preise von 1300 bis 2000* (Verlag E. & U. Brockhaus, Wuppertal), 63-67.

<sup>23</sup>Hans Peter Emanuel Hoth, Diary, translated by Peter Gulbrandsen (Bancroft Library, University of California Berkley), 22 December 1853.

<sup>24</sup>Ibid.

were exceptionally scanty on emigration ships. Tables or chairs were not provided, and light and fresh air in the berths were minimal.<sup>25</sup>

Many emigrants found food on board ship provided something to complain about. Standard fare included meals of salt meat such as ham or bacon, potatoes or rice, pickled cabbage, bean or pea soup, herring, plums, bread and butter, and coffee or tea. Water shortages and food spoilage were common.<sup>26</sup> Unfortunately sickness and disease often spread on these ships, with outbreaks of cholera, small pox, and other contagious diseases.

### **Arrival in the Port of New Orleans:**

From Hoth's 1854 daily journal, we can catch a good glimpse of what Peter's, and later, Caroline's entrance to America must have been like. He describes coming into the port at New Orleans, where steamers towed each ship about two miles up the river, then dropped anchor. Officials then came on board to inspect the captain's papers. The ships were then lined up to be towed up the river. After the first ten miles or so, beautiful estates and farms came into view. They sailed through the night, and by morning they observed sugar plantations and beautiful meadows and forests. Homes were small, but pretty, and usually situated in orchards or orange groves. Negro slaves could be seen working in the fields. The land was level, and sugar and cotton were the main crops grown.



Figure g: *The port of New Orleans, 1851*

The next day the ships arrived in New Orleans. The harbor was five miles long, filled with 914 sailing vessels and 81 steamers. Thousands of workers and carriers were busy at the port loading and unloading the ships. The city was situated in a lowland with many swamps and bogs seen even in the heart of the city. It was dirty and the odor there was unpleasant.

Hoth describes the city as “eight miles long and one and a half miles wide, with about 110,000 inhabitants, of which about 7000 were Germans and 8000 were Negroes.”<sup>27</sup> There were many factories, cotton-spinning plants, iron foundries, and impressive buildings. He described the churches as small, but pretty inside, probably a change from the beautiful cathedrals in Germany at that time.

---

<sup>25</sup>*Let's Go To America: the path of emigrants from Eastern Westphalia to the USA* (Germany: Hermann Brackmann KG, Löhne), p. 21-22.

<sup>26</sup>*Ibid.* p. 20.

<sup>27</sup>*Ibid.* 21 February 1854.

After a day in New Orleans, tickets were purchased to travel by steamer from New Orleans to St. Louis, a distance of 1,200 miles. An adult ticket was \$4.00, a child's ticket \$2.00, which was considered very expensive, especially for those who had run out of provisions and had to buy them aboard ship, or at towns along the way.<sup>28</sup>

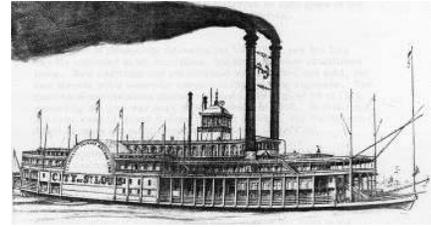


Figure h: Mississippi Steamboat, 1865

The trip to St. Louis took seventeen days, with many stops en route. Passengers were able to disembark to purchase provisions or post letters to friends and family in Germany. At one stop, Hoth tells of a ship arriving from Africa “carrying 80 wild people.” He says he saw some of them. “Their skin was copper-colored, their hair long and black. Their clothes were made from the hides of wild animals; but most of the wild men were quite naked. They had rings through their noses and ears, and some of the men had bells on their legs. All were tall and well built, and were immediately offered for sale as slaves.<sup>29</sup>” It must have been very a peculiar sight for immigrants to witness the buying and selling of slaves as they came into this country. Hoth shared his feelings on this subject:

Everyone who has journeyed in this region will admit that it is beautiful and pleasant to travel here. But everyone who still carries in his heart a grain of love for his fellow man, must look on the beauty with contempt, when he sees the poor blacks, who just as much as we white people, were created by God as free human beings, and who are being treated by their white owners as cattle, and often not even as well as that. There are masters who have from 3-400 slaves. Today we stopped several times to take on sugar, and this gave us time and opportunity to go ashore. I went along with the others and saw the owners' magnificent residences and gardens, and I must admit that I had never seen in Germany more beautiful estates than these properties. But when I turned my gaze towards the poor Negroes, with their wives and children working in the fields, then all the great and beautiful lost its value for me.<sup>30</sup>



Figure i: River route from New Orleans to St. Louis to Quincy, 1863

### Arrival in St. Louis

The journey to St. Louis was a difficult and often dangerous one. Before arriving in St. Louis, dozens of ship wrecks were seen. One steamer carrying 600 passengers was destroyed after

---

<sup>28</sup>Ibid. 4 March 1854.

<sup>29</sup>Ibid. 25 March 1854.

<sup>30</sup>Ibid. 26 February 1854.

running into floating ice.<sup>31</sup> Other steamers were damaged by floating tree trunks, or came too close to the shore and got stuck. Fires aboard ship were common. Many passengers lost their lives to these accidents or to ill health and poor traveling conditions. It must have been a relief to make it safely through the next leg of a journey.

Once in St. Louis, passengers disembarked. Many found work, as did Peter's brother Henry, who stayed in St. Louis for two years, working in a sugar factory.<sup>32</sup> Others prepared for their



Figure j: St. Louis, 1859

next destination. The harbor in St. Louis was two miles long, lying close up against the city. There were crowds of people, a lot of traffic, and many horses and carriages. Industry and commerce were booming. Hoth noted, "The commerce is important. Here are many industrial establishments, namely iron foundries, sugar factories, and many others. The number of inhabitants is placed at 150,000. This cannot be determined definitely, however, as many leave every day. It has been estimated that there are close to 40,000 Germans in the city."<sup>33</sup>

The first wave of Germans came to St. Louis in the 1830s and by 1837, more than 6,000 Germans had come. Most came looking for land to escape crowding, lured to Missouri by romanticized descriptions of the state through such agencies as the "Giessen Emigration Society" that described it as the American Rhineland. Germans came and established their own friendly neighborhoods and towns where German was spoken.<sup>34</sup>

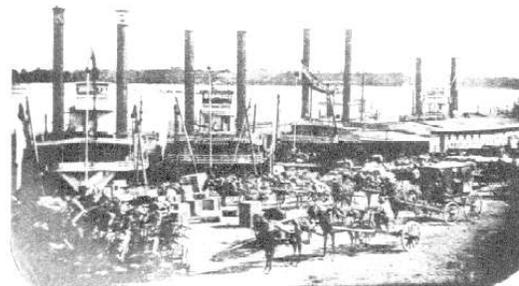


Figure k: Steamers lined up in St. Louis Harbor, 1850

At this time the United States government would buy or forcibly take land from the Indians, and then whoever wanted to stake out land for cultivation would be given a parcel to farm. A piece of land measuring 160 square yards cost from \$1.24 to \$5.00. The payment fell due after a

---

<sup>31</sup>Ibid. 7, 11 March 1854.

<sup>32</sup>David F. Wilcox, *Quincy and Adams County History and Representative Men* (Chicago and New York: The Lewis Publishing Company, 1919), 371.

<sup>33</sup>Ibid. 14 March 1854.

<sup>34</sup>Peopling St. Louis: The Immigration Experience, <http://stlouis.missouri.org/government/heritage/history/immigrant.htm>.

period of five years. If at that point the land was no longer desired, it could be turned back in again, with no gain for the work that went into it.<sup>35</sup>

Again, Hoth shared his feelings about such opportunities:

When I look at this beautiful and cheap land, my thoughts often go back to Germany where the land is so densely populated and so expensive, and where so many people, now living in poverty, could make a good living, if they were only over here.<sup>36</sup>

### **Quincy, Illinois, a Great Place to Settle**

After working in St. Louis, Henry made his way, most likely by steamboat, to Quincy, Illinois, where he established himself as the proprietor of a store on State Street from 1853-1856.<sup>37</sup> Perhaps Peter joined him there on his arrival in Quincy. At this time the trade in dry goods and groceries was large and prosperous.<sup>38</sup>

Quincy, Adams County, was a great place to make a home and begin the adventure of life in America. It was a thriving town on the banks of the Mississippi. New families arrived almost daily. The census of 1845 indicated that Quincy had a population of 4,007. Adams county, including

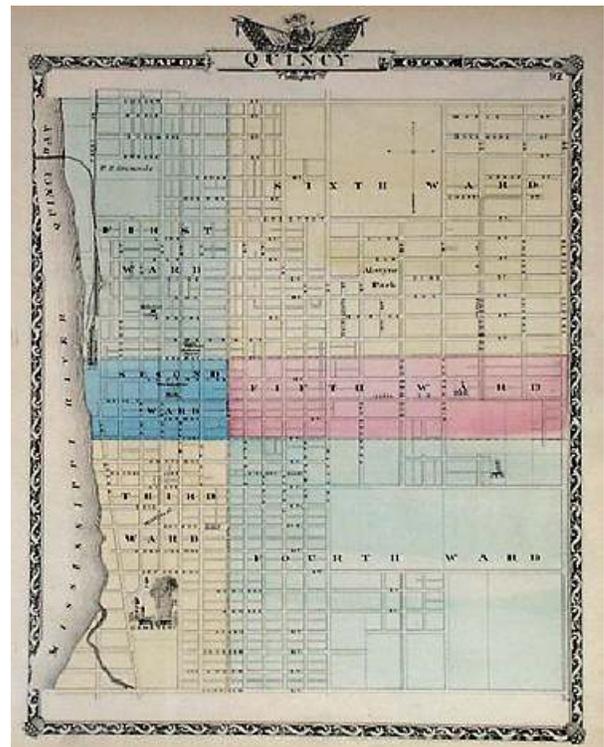


Figure 1: Quincy, Illinois, 1876

---

<sup>35</sup>Hans Peter Emanuel Hoth, *Diary*, translated by Peter Gulbrandsen (Bancroft Library, University of California Berkley), 18 May 1854.

<sup>36</sup>*Ibid.* 26 May 1854.

<sup>37</sup>William H. Collins, *Past and Present of the City of Quincy and Adams County*, Adams County IL GenWeb Project Illinois, (Chicago: S. J. Clarke Publishing Co., 1905), 392.

<sup>38</sup>Gen. John Tillson, *History of the City of Quincy, Illinois* (Chicago: S. J. Clarke Publishing Co., 1886), 168.

Quincy, had a population of 13,511.<sup>39</sup> By 1850, Quincy's population had grown to 6,901. All of Adams County, including Quincy included 25,508 people. This put Adams county after Cook, and Quincy next to Chicago as the most populous county and city in the state.<sup>40</sup> By 1855 the population in Quincy had grown to 10,754, and it continued to increase. In 1860 it reached 14,362; 24,052 in 1870; and 27,268 in 1880.<sup>41</sup>

In 1825, Quincy had become the county seat, named in honor of the newly elected United States President, John Quincy Adams. The early settlers of Quincy were joined by a wave of German immigrants in the 1840's. "The South Side German Historic District encompasses most of Quincy's southwest quarter. In the late 1800's as much as 70% of the area was inhabited by German immigrants. The district became known as 'Calf town,' due to the fact that almost every household had a cow or calf tied in their back yard."<sup>42</sup>

In the summer of 1848 telegraphic communication was established in Quincy. Shortly after that exciting event, the first directory of the city was compiled. Dr. Ware wrote in the introduction to the directory the following description of Quincy in 1848:

The geographical position of Quincy is in 40 degrees North latitude and 14 degrees West longitude from Washington City on the east bank of the Mississippi River in the county of Adams—160 miles by water above St. Louis, 110 from Springfield, the seat of government of the State of Illinois—360 from the mouth of the Ohio by water, and about 280 from Chicago at the head of Lake Michigan.

This is a point highly favored by nature, being in that mild latitude which furnishes the richest growth of all kinds of grain and luxuriant grasses, as also an abundance of all the fruits produced in the temperate zone. It is situated, too, on navigable water 800 miles below the head of steamboat navigation and communication with all the navigable streams of the Ohio and Mississippi valleys; in the heart of a region of country abounding in the most valuable timber of North America.

The general elevation is 150 feet above the average level of the Mississippi River and the neighboring bottom lands; this being the only point at which the bluffs strike the river

---

<sup>39</sup>David F. Wilcox, *Quincy and Adams County History and Representative Men* (Chicago and New York: The Lewis Publishing Co., 1919), 1:459.

<sup>40</sup>Gen. John Tillson, *History of the City of Quincy, Illinois* (Chicago: S. J. Clarke Publishing Co., 1886), 132.

<sup>41</sup>*Ibid.* 167.

<sup>42</sup>Quincy Area Convention & Visitor's Bureau, *50 Great Things to See and Do* (Quincy Visitor's Bureau), 7. Also at [www.quincy-cvb.org/thingstodo.org](http://www.quincy-cvb.org/thingstodo.org).

shore, without intervening bottom lands, for a distance of eighty or ninety miles up and down the river. The width of the river at this point was about one mile.

Quincy is doubtless a very healthful and desirable place for the convenient residence of families, affording excellent facilities for the education of children, all the privileges of Christian worship, and the best means for cheap and comfortable living.<sup>43</sup>

With Quincy's rapid growth in the 1850s and daily steamboat arrivals and departures, the river front became a beehive of activity. During the 1850s, these steamboat arrivals made Quincy a happening place. According to St. Louis steamboat Captain Joseph Brown, "from 1840 to 1850 emigration was flowing West. Everything was done in a rush, and steamboats multiplied like locusts. They were also greatly improved in the manner of construction, size and speed. . . . Owing to the rush of emigration at that time, boats could not be built fast enough. . . . In 1849, when the gold fever was at its height, there were fifty-eight fine steamers plying regularly on the Missouri river; on the Upper Mississippi about seventy-five; on the Illinois twenty-eight fine steamers; to New Orleans (lower Mississippi) about one hundred; on the Ohio about one hundred and fifty; on the Tennessee about fifteen."<sup>44</sup>

In 1853, Congress made Quincy a port of entry, which law went into effect in February 1854.<sup>45</sup> The object was to make it more convenient for the railroad to make payments on the iron imported from England.<sup>46</sup> Quincy remained a port of entry for about twenty-five years, after which all of the ports on the Mississippi were declassified.

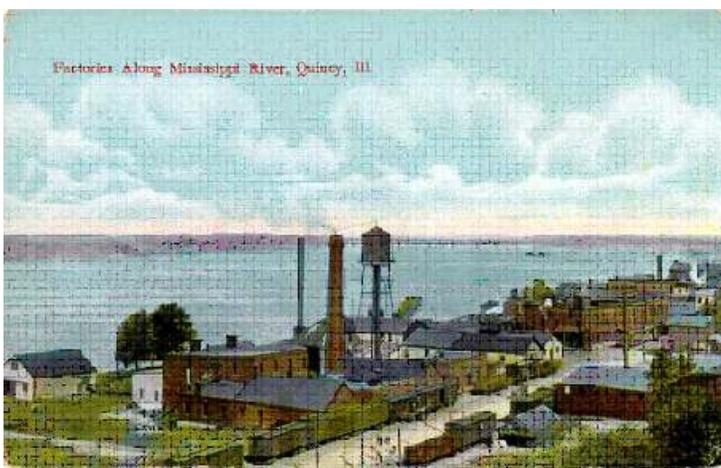


Figure m: *Factories along the Mississippi River, Quincy, Illinois*

---

<sup>43</sup>David F. Wilcox, *Quincy and Adams County History and Representative Men* (Chicago and New York: The Lewis Publishing Co., 1919), 461-63.

<sup>44</sup>Walter B. Stevens, *Recollections of a Steamboat Captain, St. Louis The Fourth City 1764-1909* (S. J. Clarke Publishing Co., 1909). [www.usgennet.org/~ahmostlu/steamboat.htm](http://www.usgennet.org/~ahmostlu/steamboat.htm).

<sup>45</sup>David F. Wilcox, *Quincy and Adams County History and Representative Men* (Chicago and New York: The Lewis Publishing Co., 1919), 465.

<sup>46</sup>Gen. John Tillson, *History of the City of Quincy, Illinois* (Chicago: S. J. Clarke Publishing Co., 1886), 147.

## Getting Established in Quincy

Peter was about twenty-one years old when he came to America. It must have been a grand adventure for a young man his age to leave his home and family and follow his older brother, Henry, to a new life in a relatively new country. Compared to his rural life in Ummeln, life in Quincy held one exciting event after another.

At this time, slavery was a major religious and social issue. Quincy was only separated from the slave state, Missouri, by the Mississippi River, and became a hotbed of political controversy. The first station on the Underground Railroad was located in Quincy. Quincy was also a site for the seventh senatorial debate by U.S. Senator Stephen Douglas and his challenger, Abraham Lincoln. From August to October of 1858, the two rivals faced off seven times. “Crowds of thousands came on foot, on horseback, in buggies, on trains, and on boats to hear them. One could smell the smoke of thundering cannon, hear the drums beat and the horns blare as bands and fireworks added to the drama.”<sup>47</sup> Quincy was the largest city in which the two candidates appeared.<sup>48</sup>

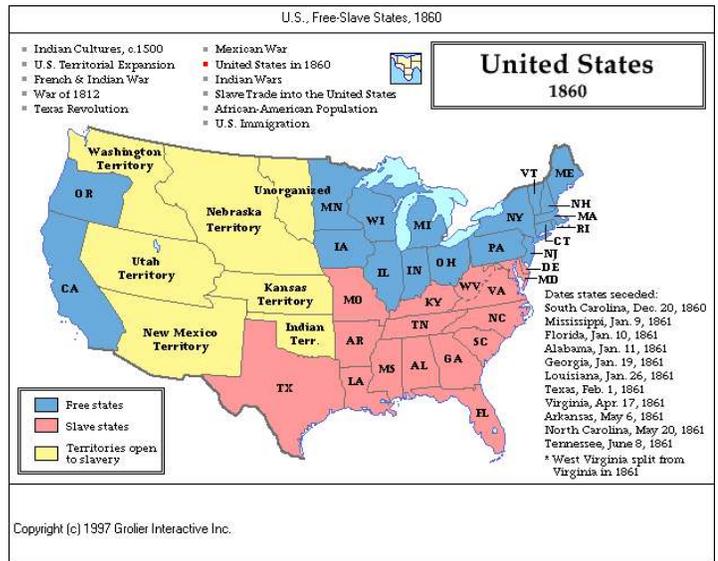


Figure n: Slave States in 1860

Opportunities for communication with family members in Germany were also improving in Quincy. The first daily mail had been established in 1852, carried by steamer from St. Louis to Galena. The month before the daily mail was established, the *Whig* was published as the first daily newspaper.<sup>49</sup> Peter and Caroline probably anticipated letters and word from home and family. In 1856 Caroline must have received the exciting news that her eighth sibling was born in Quelle: a new little sister named Christine.

<sup>47</sup>Tanya Lee Stone, *Abraham Lincoln, A Photographic Story of a Life* (London: DK Publishing, 2005), 55.

<sup>48</sup>Quincy Area Convention & Visitors Bureau, *History of Quincy* at [www.quincynet.com](http://www.quincynet.com).

<sup>49</sup>David F. Wilcox, *Quincy and Adams County History and Representative Men* (Chicago and New York: The Lewis Publishing Co., 1919), 465.

To get an idea of the growing industry and opportunities for work in Quincy, the figures at the end of 1853 show that Quincy reported the annual export trade of the city amounting to \$1,248,011. This figure includes all the values of product and manufacture that had been sold and shipped away.

Among the leading items cited therein were 3,153 barrels of beef, 6,850 of crackers, 28,923 of flour, 20,296 of whiskey, 101 carriages, 594 wagons, 5,092 stoves, 4,165 plows, 4,119 hides, 8,039 bales of hay, 116 hogsheads of tallow, 3,600 boxed candles, 430,000 feet of lumber, 358,000 laths and shingles, \$91,000 worth of castings, engines, etc., 40,866 bushels of wheat, 71,386 of corn and 137,299 of oats.

At the same time, business employments reported 3 steam flour and 2 steam saw mills, 2 distilleries, 25 steam engines in use, 6 machine shops, 4 foundries, 1 cotton, 1 woolen, 1 ware, 1 flooring factory, 3 sash, 3 carriage, 3 large wholesale furniture factories and several smaller ones, 2 extensive wagon and plow factories and 7 smaller ones, 2 planing mills, 5 lumber yards, 1 book-bindery, 2 hardware, 6 iron and stove, 3 books and stationery, 4 drug and over 200 retail stores, grocery, dry goods, etc., 2 banking houses, 18 churches, 2 daily and 3 weekly English and 2 weekly Germany newspapers. The official valuation of city property for taxation, real and personal, footed \$2,076,360.<sup>50</sup>

Opportunities for work and employment were plentiful. It is probable that Peter and Henry came to America with small purses and found ample opportunity to seek their fortunes in Quincy. In 1850, the Social Statistics Census shows the following average wages in Adams County:

\$ 10.00	monthly wage to a farm hand with board
.50	wage to a day-laborer with board
.75	wage to a day-laborer without board
1.50	wage to a Carpenter without daily board
1.25	weekly wage to a female domestic with board
1.50	weekly wage to a laboring man <sup>51</sup>

Another big event in Quincy in 1854 was the completion of the gas works and the first lighting up of the city on December 1<sup>st</sup>. "This was as great a gala day, or night, rather, as Quincy had as yet known, and was heralded by a general turning on of the gas in all the street lamps and private

---

<sup>50</sup>Gen. John Tillson, *History of the City of Quincy, Illinois* (Chicago: S. J. Clarke Publishing Co., 1886), 146-47.

<sup>51</sup>1850 U. S. Illinois Census Social Statistics (Illinois Trails web site), <http://www.iltrails.org/1850censusschedule.html>.

houses and a general turning out of all the people into the streets to see how the city and themselves looked, and also by a gay evening banquet at the Quincy House.”<sup>52</sup>

By 1854, eighteen religious societies in Quincy had services for regular worship. Five of these were conducted in German: two Evangelical, one Lutheran, one Methodist Episcopal, and one Catholic. The Catholic societies were by far the largest.<sup>53</sup> Some church records for Henry’s family can be found in the St. Jacobi Evangelical Lutheran Church, but none were found there for Peter’s family.<sup>54</sup>

In 1856, the completion of the railroad from Galesburg on the last day of January brought a jubilee time. The press reported as follows, with the flaring design of a locomotive and train and the big headlines: “Through to Chicago. A railroad connection with the Atlantic cities. All aboard.”

We have the great satisfaction of announcing the completion of the Northern Cross Railroad. The last rail is upon the ties and the last spike is driven, and another iron arm reaches from the great west unto the Atlantic!

No event ever occurred in the history of the place that was hailed with more of universal satisfaction than the final construction of this road.<sup>55</sup>

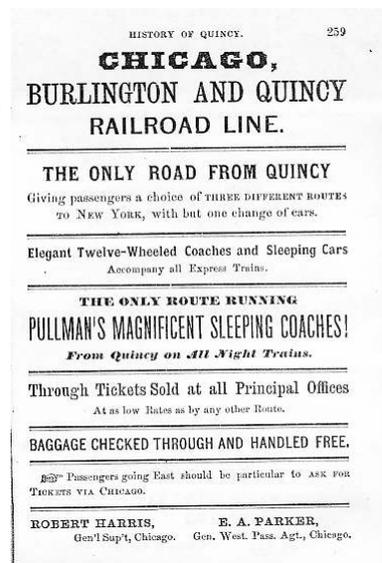


Figure 0: Railroad Advertisement

As public land was transferred to railroad companies, the 111 miles of track in Illinois in 1850 increased to over 10,000 by 1890. Thousands of new settlers were attracted to the lands along the Illinois Central. Family incomes grew larger because of the increased markets for Illinois products. Lower transportation costs for local goods made it possible for families to acquire more household goods and to have a wider selection.<sup>56</sup>

---

<sup>52</sup>Gen. John Tillson, *History of the City of Quincy, Illinois* (Chicago: S. J. Clarke Publishing Co., 1886), 154.

<sup>53</sup>*Ibid.* 157.

<sup>54</sup>St. Jacobi Evangelical Lutheran Church, Quincy (St. James Lutheran), microfilms no. 1,434,886; 1,434,887, Family History Library, Salt Lake City, Utah.

<sup>55</sup>Gen. John Tillson, *History of the City of Quincy, Illinois* (Chicago: S. J. Clarke Publishing Co., 1886), 163.

<sup>56</sup>*Growth of Railroads in Illinois From 1850-1890*, <http://www.museum.state.il.us/exhibits/athome/1850/maps/index.html>

## Family Life Begins

About a year after Peter' arrival, Caroline Lübker emigrated to America and found her way to Quincy. Perhaps it was a happy reunion for the two, who likely grew up together as their families in Germany attended the same parish church.

At this time all the people knew each other; the interests of each were the interests of all; men mingled more together. Secluded during a large portion of the year, while frost fettered their communications with the outer world, hibernated, as it were, they were thrown upon their own resources for occupation and enjoyment. The winters had to be passed through, and there were then no opera houses, dime museums, skating rinks, traveling show; nothing from outside, for they couldn't get here, and hence society had to fall back on itself, and there was then brought out, of course, "all the fun there was." The social assemblings, parties, tea drinkings, church gatherings, sleigh rides, etc., passed away the time. . . . The chief and periodical attraction of the winters were the weekly library lectures. . . . The lectures were home-made, prepared by our own citizens, with an occasional, though very rare, addition by some neighboring clergyman or by one of the Illinois College professors. They were given gratis, and upon such subjects as the writers chose. They were attractive and well attended, and they fully served a pleasant, social purpose.<sup>57</sup>



Figure p: Inside Salem Church, Quincy

In this society filled with fellow immigrants, new neighbors, friends, and new beginnings, Peter and Caroline renewed their friendship and married 29 December 1858.<sup>58</sup> Rev. Simon Liese, pastor at the Salem Evangelical Church in Quincy, performed the marriage.<sup>59</sup> He served at the Salem church for about eight years, then in 1860 took with him all but forty-seven of the voting members of the congregation to form St. Peter's Evangelical Lutheran Church.<sup>60</sup> In the 1960s a fire in the Salem Church destroyed all records prior to that time which may have included records from the Bastert family.<sup>61</sup>

---

<sup>57</sup>Gen. John Tillson, *History of the City of Quincy, Illinois* (Chicago: S. J. Clarke Publishing Co., 1886), 125.

<sup>58</sup>Adams County Marriage Index, microfilm no. 1,870,158, Family History Library, Salt Lake City, Utah.

<sup>59</sup>Ibid.

<sup>60</sup>David F. Wilcox, *Quincy and Adams County History and Representative Men* (Chicago and New York: The Lewis Publishing Co., 1919), 553. [Note: No records were found for the Bastert families in St. Peter's.]

<sup>61</sup>Email from Salem Church Secretary to the author dated 5 April 2005.

In 1860, Abraham Lincoln left Illinois to become the president of the United States. Peter and Caroline's first son, Henry William, was born in 1861<sup>62</sup> against the backdrop of the outbreak of the Civil War. Not everyone chose to go to war. The government held four drafts during the war and Illinois sent men in two of them. In all, the Civil War took 256,397 Illinois men away from their families; over 34,000 were killed or died of disease.<sup>63</sup> There are no records indicating that Peter or Henry fought in the Civil War, but it probably had a profound influence on their daily lives and community.

The family continued to grow. Henry William was followed by Frank in 1865,<sup>64</sup> Johanna in 1867,<sup>65</sup> and Louise in 1869.<sup>66</sup> In 1870, the Quincy 1870 census describes Peter as a porter in a dry goods store, with Caroline keeping house.<sup>67</sup> Wilhelmina (Minnie) was born in 1871,<sup>68</sup> Emma in 1873,<sup>69</sup> and Amelia's arrival completed the family in 1877.<sup>70</sup> Each of these Bastert children grew up in Quincy and lived to adulthood.

Peter and his family lived at 711 Payson Avenue in the heart of Quincy, just about five city blocks from the

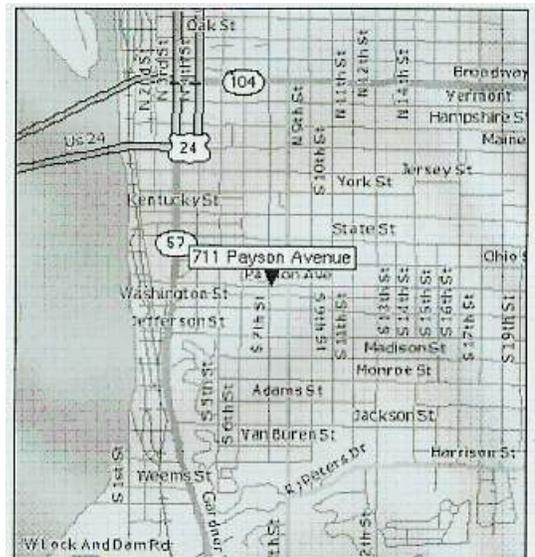


Figure q: Location of the Peter Bastert home in Quincy, Illinois

<sup>62</sup>Tombstone Records, Adams Co., microfilm no.1,642,711 Family History Library, Salt Lake City, Utah.

<sup>63</sup>*At Home in a House Divided 1850-1890*, <http://www.museum.state.il.us/exhibits/athome/1850/TeachR/level2.htm>

<sup>64</sup>Peter Bastert, household, 1880 U.S. Census, Adams County, Illinois, town of Quincy, enumeration district 29, supervisor's district 6, page 21, [www.ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com).

<sup>65</sup>Ibid.

<sup>66</sup>Ibid.

<sup>67</sup>Peter Bastert, household, 1870, Quincy County Census, Adams County, Illinois, 4<sup>th</sup> Ward, enumerated 9 June 1870, Heritage Quest Online, M593, roll 187, page 544.

<sup>68</sup>Peter Bastert, household, 1880 U.S. Census, Adams County, Illinois, town of Quincy, enumeration district 29, supervisor;s district 6, page 21, [www.ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com).

<sup>69</sup>Ibid.

<sup>70</sup>Ibid.

waterfront.<sup>71</sup> At some point, Henry's first wife,<sup>72</sup> Anna Margareta Luise Steinbeck, died. In 1851 he remarried Louise Hollenstein from Germany.<sup>73</sup> She died in Quincy a year later.<sup>74</sup> In 1856 he married Hannah Louise Speckmann.<sup>75</sup> They had six children whose ages were very close to the ages of Peter's children.<sup>76</sup> They lived a block away at 808 Payson Avenue.<sup>77</sup> Henry was an influential man in the community, described by his peers as a "solid, substantial citizen," a man of "brains and of action."<sup>78</sup> Surely the cousins had a great time playing together exploring the waterfront and watching the steamboats load and unload while the women folk cared for their hard-working husbands and families.

In 1869 there were ten public schools in Quincy. One of them, a primary school named Irving School, was just a block away from the Bastert families, on Payson Avenue, between Eighth and Ninth streets. Student enrollment numbered 230, and it is likely that the Bastert children were among them. Both English and German were taught in this four-roomed public school.<sup>79</sup>



Figure r: Irving School, Quincy

---

<sup>71</sup>*The History of Adams County, Illinois, Portraits of Early Settlers and Prominent Men.* (Chicago: Murray, Williamson & Phelps, 1879), 596.

<sup>72</sup>Kirchenbuch 1712-1959, Evangelische Kirche Brackwede, Birth Record, microfilm no. 582265, Family History Library, Salt Lake City, Utah.

<sup>73</sup>Illinois Marriages 1851-1900, State of Illinois, [www.ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com).

<sup>74</sup>St. Jacobi Church Records, Quincy, Adams County, Illinois, Death Register, microfilm no. 1,434,866, Family History Library, Salt Lake City, Utah.

<sup>75</sup>Illinois Statewide Marriage Index, 1763-1900, State of Illinois, <http://www.cyberdriveillinois.com/GenealogyMWeb/MarriageSearchServlet>.

<sup>76</sup>Henry Bastert, household, 1870, Quincy County Census, Adams County, Illinois, 4<sup>th</sup> Ward, enumerated 11 June 1870.

<sup>77</sup>*The History of Adams County, Illinois, Portraits of Early Settlers and Prominent Men,* (Chicago: Murray, Williamson & Phelps, 1879) 596.

<sup>78</sup>C. Arthur Fifer, *Do You Remember?* (1951), 138. Heritage Quest Online Books, or Ancestry.com Family and Local Histories.

<sup>79</sup>Pat H. Redmond, *History of Quincy, and Its Men of Mark*, (Quincy: Heirs & Russell, 1869), 231-233. [Note: In an email dated 7 April 2005 from Carol Frericks, current principal of Irving School, she informed the author that they are in the process of locating and compiling historical information about the school.]

As Caroline raised her children, another exciting invention was born: Wheeler and Wilson marketed a light-weight sewing machine. Their model had a special glass presser foot that allowed the seamstress to sew close to an edge. Although sewing-machine prices dropped after the Civil War, a machine was still a sizeable investment. Sometimes neighboring families pooled their money to share a machine or purchased a machine on an installment plan.<sup>80</sup> Caroline used and owned her own machine, no doubt a wonderful blessing in her life.<sup>81</sup>

### **A Life's Ending**

Sometime in the late 1870s, Peter purchased a farm a few miles out from Quincy, near Paloma in Camp Point Township. Peter was described as, “very well to do, having accumulated considerable property.”<sup>82</sup> He provided the new farm with a full complement of machinery, but according to his obituary notice in the *The Quincy Daily Whig*,<sup>83</sup> he had some unfortunate crop failures and found “the venture unsuited to him and unprofitable.”

On 18 October 1882, Peter took his life. His obituary suggests that “he had become somewhat demented, and it is believed killed himself under this mental aberration.” In his barn he committed suicide by hanging.<sup>84</sup> It was a tragic ending to a very full life. He was forty-nine and one half years old, and left his wife, Caroline, and seven children. His youngest, Amelia, was only two years old at the time.

In the days following Peter’s death, Henry was named the administrator of Peter’s estate.<sup>85</sup> He helped to set his brother’s affairs in order and distribute the inheritance. Caroline received the amount of \$253.11. Each of the seven children received \$72.30.<sup>86</sup>

---

<sup>80</sup>*At Home in a House Divided: 1850-1890*,  
<http://www.museum.state.il.us/exhibits/athome/1850/objects/sewingmach.htm>.

<sup>81</sup>Estate Records, ca. 1832-1938, Adams County Court, Adams County, Illinois, microfilm no. 933889, Box #27, Household Inventory. Family History Library, Salt Lake City, Utah.

<sup>82</sup>Peter Bastert Obituary, *The Quincy Daily Whig*, Quincy, Illinois, 19 Oct 1882, p. 8.

<sup>83</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>84</sup>Peter Bastert entry, Adams County Death Register 1881-1886, microfilm no. 1,870156, Family History Library, Salt Lake City, Utah.

<sup>85</sup>Peter Bastert entry, Adams County Death Register 1881-1886, microfilm no. 1,870156, Family History Library, Salt Lake City, Utah.

<sup>86</sup>Estate Records, ca. 1832-1938, Adams County Court, Adams County, Illinois, microfilm no. 933889, Family History Library, Salt Lake City, Utah, Box #27.

At the time of Peter’s death, an inventory of household items included the following:

Wearing apparel, jewels, and ornaments	\$100
School books and family library	100
One sewing machine	15
Beds, bedsteads, and bedding	50
The stove and pipe and cooking utensils	100
Household and kitchen furniture	100
Milch cow	60
Sheep and fleeces	30
One horse, saddle and bridle	60
Provisions for widow and family for one year	350
Food for the stock above specified for six months	50
Fuel for the widow and family for three months	30
Other property	<u>100</u>
	<u>\$1095</u>



Figure s: Sewing Machine, 1869

Other Articles listed in his estate records included: 3 bedsteads, bedding feathers, 1 bureau [sic], 2 clothpressers, 2 tables, 21 chairs, 2 lounges, 1 covert, 3 stoves and pipes, 1 block, bed linnens [sic], sewing machine, 2 cows, 3 cords of wood, 2 centre tables, 3 baskets, three corn beds, 10 bushels of potatoes, 1 wagon, 1 spring wagon, single set of harness, 1 horse, 1 iron cettle [sic], 1 saddle and cooking utensils. These items were valued at \$297.00.<sup>87</sup>

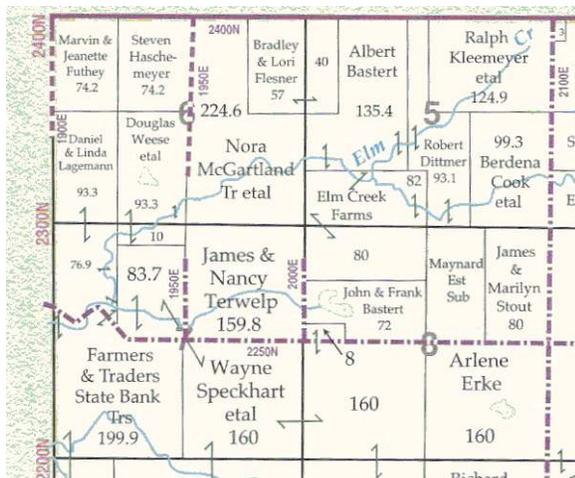


Figure t: Northwest corner of section six where the Peter Baster Farm was located in Camp Point Township

The locality of his real estate was listed as “The northwest quarter of section six (6) township one (1) north of baseline and range (6) west of the fourth principal meridian 148 acres of cultivated land.” He also owned “One lot number (12) in block no. seventy eight (78) city of Quincy 2.” The cultivated land was valued at \$6000, and the house in Quincy at \$3500.<sup>88</sup>

In another petitioned filed, it stated that Peter Bastert possessed real and personal estate consisting chiefly of 150 acres of farmland in Camp Point Township and two Houses and Lot in Quincy, Household furniture and some farm stock.<sup>89</sup>

<sup>87</sup>Ibid. Real Estate Inventory.

<sup>88</sup>Ibid.

<sup>89</sup>Ibid.

These inventories give us a good idea of what the Bastert family living conditions were like and how they provided for themselves. Now Caroline was to become the head of the household. She probably received logistic help and emotional support from Henry and his family, but it must have been a very difficult time for her.

Caroline stayed in Quincy,<sup>90</sup> where she raised her children. In 1885 she became their legal guardian.<sup>91</sup> In the 1910 census, she is listed at age seventy-four as widow with eight children, seven still living.<sup>92</sup>

Caroline died 10 October 1915 in Quincy of valvular heart disease and chronic gastritis.<sup>93</sup> She is buried next to Peter in Greenmount Cemetery, plot #104.<sup>94</sup>

Peter and Caroline Bastert were pioneers in their families. They lived in a day and age where they could change the course of their own lives. Each started in a small village in Germany. They were immigrants in a new country where it probably seemed as if they had the whole world before them. They were eyewitnesses to expansion, growth and innovations. They experienced the heartaches associated with the social and political challenges that led the country into a Civil War. They worked on the land, in commerce, and raised a fine family, contributing to the growth of our nation. They were a living part of the American Dream.

---

<sup>90</sup>Quincy, Illinois Directory, 1887-1890, ancestry.com.

<sup>91</sup>Guardian's Index, Adams County, Illinois, Circuit Court 1830-1886, 21 October 1885, microfilm no. 961234, Family History Library, Salt Lake City, Utah.

<sup>92</sup>Caroline Bastert household, 1910 U.S. census, Adams County, Illinois, Series T624, roll 230, page 36. [One of these children is unaccounted for or recorded incorrectly]

<sup>93</sup>Caroline Bastert, Death Register 1814-1915, Quincy, Adams County, 7 October 1915, microfilm no. 1,870,158, Family History Library, Salt Lake City, Utah.

<sup>94</sup>Caroline Bastert, Death Register 1814-1915, Quincy, Adams County, 7 October 1915, microfilm no. 1,870,158, Family History Library, Salt Lake City, Utah.