

# Our Family News Letter

Issue 45

Greendale, Wisconsin

June, 2004

## A Letter From Brighton, Kenosha County, Wisconsin to Alendorf, Germany in 1873

The following letter was sent to me by Pamela Kebis in April 2004. It is a letter from John Bovy to his cousin in Alendorf, Germany, the ancestral home of the Heck and Schaefer families. The name Bovy has also been shown as Bovey and Bovie. I had previously obtained and published a copy of a letter by Christian Bovy, the father of John Bovy. That letter was written to relatives in Alendorf in 1857. I published the 1857 letter in the June, 1995, Issue 9 of Our Family News Letter. In the 1857 letter Christian wrote about several people living in Brighton who were from Alendorf. Luisa Schaefer married Peter Bovy.

In the letter shown below from John Bovy, he mentions the death of Egidius Giefer in Swan Lake, Minnesota. Egidius Giefer was the father of Elizabeth Alice Giefer. Elizabeth Alice Giefer married Joseph Josiah Heck, son of Johann Heck and Susannah Sebenbrunner Zeren from Swan Lake, Minnesota. Johann Heck was the first from our Heck family to immigrate to the United States in 1852.

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Young America, Minnesota, March 23, 1873.

Dear Cousin and all,

I hope you will pardon me for failing to answer your valued letter. We are still all in health, except mother. She died on the 17<sup>th</sup> of January. Her funeral was the most splendid that has yet been held here. We counted thirty-seven vehicles in addition to those on horseback and on foot. The graveyard is twenty minutes distant from us and there is our own priest.

Summer before last was a very hot one but a good harvest. The winter just past was the coldest I have experienced here; much snow but little water. Spring is coming on nicely, although late for so hard a winter.

Such a storm as one of January 8 has never been experienced in the recollection of man. It cost the lives of many people and cattle. Egidius Giefer lost his life. He was going to the railway station with a team, hauling wheat. The storm surprised him on the way home. His team, strong though they were, could not withstand the storm which came from the west and much less himself. The horses turned without him knowing it and went back, coming almost to the station, when he felt that he was going, unhitched his team, abandoned everything, and ran for his life, but in vain. His life was a sacrifice to the blizzard.

Grain prices have been pretty firm this winter: one dollar per bushel for wheat, oats thirty to thirty-five cents, corn forty, barley fifty-seven to seventy-five cents per bushel.

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This newsletter is written and published quarterly and is distributed without charge. Contributions to help cover the costs are greatly appreciated.

Guest editorials and articles are always welcome. So are your family pictures.

Our home page address is:  
**<http://www.execpc.com/~bheck/heck.htm>**

Cattle are just as cheap. Last spring I sold one mare six years of age for \$150; this year, a colt for \$80. For a stallion five years old \$450 was offered March 20<sup>th</sup>. I have not, however, sold him for that. Beef cattle are the same; a yoke of oxen can be bought for \$80 to \$120. A cow for \$20 to \$50; fat hogs in winter from three to two cents a pound, now six to seven cents; beef from five to eight cents a pound. A wether we sold for nine dollars. He weighed, dressed, 110 pounds.

I cannot omit to express my sympathy for you and all Germans over the Bismarckian regim? in regard to God, religion, and humanity. Without question the regents of Europe will be overthrown as others have been overthrown. But – oh dreadful thought, that a religious war is almost unavoidable. Woo to you then, you young Germans! The war with Austria and with France is to me a shadow of the future for Europe.

Your cousin,  
John Bovy

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## The Heck Family Picnic

On July 18, 2004, the Heck family will celebrate our 38<sup>th</sup> consecutive family reunion picnic at the Leisure Center in Racine, Wisconsin. The celebration starts off with an early bird breakfast at Hammez's Restaurant on Douglas Avenue and High Street in Racine at 7:00 AM. I did say that it was an early bird breakfast, didn't I?

Everyone is invited to the breakfast even if you do not plan on golfing with the hackers. Feel free to join us.

Golfing begins at 8:30 AM at Shoop Park on Racine's beautiful northern lakefront. If the weather is just right you can even almost hear the palm trees swaying in the salty Lake Michigan breeze. Well, maybe not salty. If you would like to golf the fee is \$5.00 plus the green fee for nine holes. The \$5.00 goes toward some great prizes

and for the cleaning bill for the coveted Heck Family Red Blazer awarded to the best golfer. Best here is defined as the person who comes closest to shooting his or her estimated score.

Be sure to call Rick Heck at (262) 682-1279 if you would be interested in golfing. You do not have to be good to golf at the picnic. You just need to have a good sense of humor.

Following the golf outing the picnic lunch begins at the Leisure Center, which is just a short distance from the golf course. The cost for the picnic is \$5.00 per family, which covers the Leisure Center rental fee, coffee, cups, silverware, grills, and napkins. Swimming is available for \$1.00 per person. Locker rooms are available at the pool.

There will be lots of games for the kids but we need to know how many children under 10 will be coming so the appropriate prizes can be purchased. Please call Cel at (262) 639-5370 or Shirley at (262) 681-9427 or e-mail her at [sheck@execpc.com](mailto:sheck@execpc.com)

Be sure to bring along some of those old pictures of the family. We always have photo albums available with pictures of our ancestors going back to Johann Heck, the first of our family to immigrate to the United States in 1852. We even have pictures of the Heck family picnics of years gone by. At one time the Hecks celebrated together at Brown's Lake near Burlington, Wisconsin. That was back in 1948. In 1949 the Heck family picnic was celebrated at my parent's home on Jones Avenue in Racine. The polio epidemic of 1950 put an end to the picnics for at least ten years. Then in 1966 we started our 38 year string of family reunions and picnics. In those days they were held at Lincoln Field. We moved the picnic to the Wind Point lighthouse until the flies got the better of us. Now we have been holding the picnic at the Leisure Center with no flies and a good place to swim. Oh yes, and a lot of good company!!!!



1954

Dick and Cel Heck are celebrating their 50<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary this year in Racine, Wisconsin. They were married in Racine in 1954, and have lived their entire married life there. At right is a picture of the happy couple cutting their wedding cake. The seven-layer cake was actually as tall as it appears. Congratulations Dick and Cel from all of the readers of "Our Family News Letter."



2004



# Joseph Heck

## 1841 – 1919

Joseph Heck was the son of Johann Heck and Anna Barbara Schaefer. Born 17 Feb 1841, at Alendorf, Germany, he was the fourth of five children born to Johann and Barbara. His siblings were Peter Heck, Anna Lucia Heck Boor, Henry Heck, and Clara Heck Brunner.

In 1852 he immigrated to the United States with his parents, brothers and sisters. Initially the family lived in Brighton, Kenosha County, Wisconsin on land adjacent to the Bong Recreational Area (Bong Air Force Base). The original home is still standing however it has been expanded and renovated several times since 1852.

In 1855 the family was dealt a big blow with the death of Anna Barbara Schaefer Heck. In 1856, Johann married the widow Susannah Sebenbrunner Zeren. The new family unit now had 12 children ranging in age from 20 years to one year. They are listed here from oldest to youngest with their birth year: Peter Heck 1834, Anna Lucia Heck 1836, Henry Heck 1839, Joseph Heck 1841, Clara Heck 1843, John Zeren 1846, Anna Zeren 1848, Margaret Zeren 1852, Nicholas Zeren 1852, Peter Zeren 1853, Philip Zeren 1854, and Mary Zeren 1855. The family was not to remain so small as Johann and Susannah added four more children as follows: Lucy Heck Dorn 1857, Joseph Josiah Heck 1859, Andrew Heck 1863, and Annie Heck Meyer 1866.

Johann Heck was 56 and Susannah was 46 when their last child was born.

### Joseph Heck in the Civil War

In early May (1862), Joseph and his comrades left St. Louis, Missouri, on the troop transport, JOHN J. ROE. They traveled down the Mississippi and then up the Tennessee River to Ham-

burg Landing to join the Union troops besieging Corinth, Mississippi. He was injured on May 1, when the upper deck on the overloaded boat collapsed. Joseph was sent to a field hospital and treated for injuries to his left side. He continued to suffer from the accident throughout the War and after his discharge. (Note: I think that the May 1st date should be June 1st.)

Joseph was admitted to a hospital on June 3, 1862, and was not released to his unit until December 23.

On August 14, 1863, just days before the surrender of Atlanta, Joseph's previous injuries were serious enough for him to be transferred to Ft. Snelling, Minnesota.

### The Obituary of Joseph Heck

Brown County, Minnesota Journal - May 3, 1919

Joseph Heck succumbed to cancer at a local hospital Wednesday afternoon. Deceased had been cared for at the Hospital for some two weeks before his death and at the John Schweiss home two and one half months prior to that. He had been ailing some three years. Deceased was born at Coblenz, Rhenish, Prussia, Feb. 17, 1840, (sic) being 79 years of age at the time of his demise.

He came with his parents to America when he was about twelve years old and resided a number of years in Wisconsin. He came to New Ulm in the early sixties and enlisted in the service of his country in 1862 and continued until the end of the war. He was married to Mrs. Sophie Brunner, who survives, about thirty -five years ago at the local Catholic Church. Three children were born to this union, one son, Alois Heck of this city, who survives and two daughters, who have passed away. He is also survived by one brother and two sisters, viz. Henry Heck, Waterford, Wis.; Mrs. Wm. Dorn, Storm Lake, IA and Mrs. Vincent Brunner, New Ulm and also by

four Grandchildren. The funeral was held yesterday morning at 3:30 o'clock at the St. George Catholic Church, after which the remains were incarcerated in the cemetery nearby.

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### Henry Matteson Memorial Stone



Location of Matteson Memorial Stone: Historical Cemetery #: EG007 Vaughn Lot East Greenwich, Kent County, Rhode Island, USA The Rocky Hill Flea Market occupies this site at present. The front and back of the stone is shown.



Henry Matteson, the emigrant and ancestor of a majority of Mattesons in America lived on Prudence Island in Rhode Island where he made peace with the Indians and faithfully kept that peace, and he was a faithful friend of Roger

Williams. Henry came to Rhode Island in 1666-1667. During King Phillip's War he lived on Prudence Island in Narragansett Bay. After the war he returned to the mainland and settled in East Greenwich, RI when the town started in 1677.

Our family descends from the first child of Henry Matteson and Hannah Parsons, Captain Henry Matteson. Nine generations are shown below.

9. Henry Matteson & Hannah Parsons
8. Captain Henry Matteson & Judith Weaver
7. Hezekiah Matteson & Mary Sweet
6. George Matteson & Luranah Matteson
5. Zilpha Matteson & Benajah Burgess
4. Benjamin Burgess & Rebecca Chase
3. Patience Burgess & Peter McNulty
2. Mary Ann McNulty & Henry Heck
1. Robert S. Heck & Margaret F. Henningfeld

Robert S. Heck and Margaret F. Henningfeld were my grandparents.

Our family also descends from Henry Matteson and Hannah Parsons' third child, Joseph Matteson.

9. Henry Matteson & Hannah Parsons
8. Joseph Matteson & Rachel Weaver
7. Josiah Matteson & Marcy Nichols
6. Luranah Matteson & George Matteson
5. Zilpha Matteson & Benajah Burgess
4. Benjamin Burgess & Rebecca Chase
3. Patience Burgess & Peter McNulty
2. Mary Ann McNulty & Henry Heck
1. Robert S. Heck & Margaret F. Henningfeld

### Last Will of Marcy Nichols Matteson

Marcy Nichols born March 22, 1722 - died 1815, wife of Josiah Matteson born 1720

In the name of God Amen the 23rd day of March AD 1808 I **Marcy Matteson** of West Greenwich

in the County of Kent being Weak of body but a perfect and Sound mind and Memory thanks be to God for the Same therefore calling to mind the Mortality of body, and knowing that it is appointed for all people once to die, I do hereby make and ordain this my Last will and Testament.

That is to Say first of all I give and Recommend My Soul to the hands of God that gave it and my body I Recommend to the earth to be buried in Some decent manner at the discretion of my Executor hereafter Named, and as it hath pleased God to bless me in this life I Give and dispose of the Same in the following Manner and form-

I Give to my son **Stukley Matteson** Two meat casks with a Cover to each of them, also I Give to the said **Stukley** one Striped black and red bed blanket, I also give to the said **Stukley** a Slice and tongs, and Small Trammel ~

I also Give to my Son **Russel Matteson** Two Meat Casks with no Covers, I also Give to said son **Rusell** one Square cupboard, I also give to the said **Russel** one Lantern and one Small Trammel.

I also Give to my Grand daughter **Eunice Matteson** daughter to **Luraney Matteson** one Looking Glass. I also Give to the Said **Eunice** one Small red chest~ I also Give to the said **Eunice** one White bed Blanket, I also Give to the Said **Eunice** one Small pair of tongs and five pan I also Give to the Said **Eunice** one pewter bason holding three pints. I also Give to my daughter **Rachel Sweet** a Brass Kettle.

I also Give to my daughter **Rosanna Matteson** one pair of worsted combs~ All the Remainder to be Equally divided between my three daughters **Rosannah, Dinah** and **Rachel**, furthermore My Money and cow if I have any Money and cow, to be Equally divided betwixt all of my Children all these above said Articles to be paid out by my Executors~

I Likewise appoint and ordain my son **Stukley Matteson** and **Russel** to be my Executors of this my Last Will and Testament to pay all of my Just Debts and Legacies herein Mentioned and I do hereby disallow all other or former Wills Testaments Legacies or Executors by me in anywise made Ratifying and Confirming this and no Other to be my Last Will and Testament. In Witness hereof I have hereunto Set my hand and Seal the day and year above written Signed Sealed Published pronounced and declared by the said **Marcy Matteson** as Last Will and Testament in the presence of us the subscribers.

	her
Wm Sweet	Marcy x Matteson
Alce Sweet	seal
Sarah Sweet	mark

Whereas **Stukley Matteson** and **Russel Matteson** Executors to the foregoing Will appeared before the Court of probate at their Meeting on the 24th day of April AD 1815 and presented Said Will in order for a Probate, and two of the Witnesses to wit Wm Sweet and Alce Sweet appeared before said Court at the Same time and on oath declared that they saw the Testatrix to wit the said **Marcy Matteson** now deceased Sign Seal publish pronounce and declare the Said Instrument to be her Last will and Testament, and that in her presence and in the presence of Sarah Sweet the other Subscribing Witness, the Set their hands to said Instrument as Witnesses, and the the said Sarah set her hand as a Witness at the Same time, and that according to the best of their Judgement the Testatrix was at the time of Executing the Same of a Sound disposing mind and memory for which Reason Said Will is proved and approved of by said Court and allowed a Lawfull Probate.

a Witness Jon " Nichols P.Clk

The Foregoing Will With the Probate Recorded April 25th AD 1815 by a Jon " Nichols P Clk.



Note that the will is presented exactly as found. Punctuation and spelling are as found in the transcription of the will. **Luraney Matteson** shown in the will is Luranah Matteson, wife of George Matteson. In her father's will she is listed as Luranah Matteson.

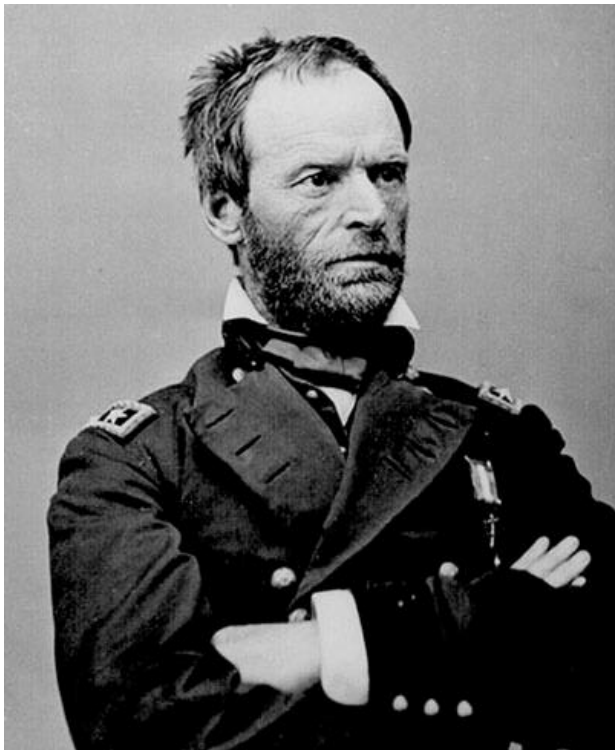
Luranah Matteson and George Matteson are 2nd cousins. Their common ancestors are Henry MATTESON and Hannah PARSONS.

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## Did you know that ...

General William Tecumseh SHERMAN and Robert John HECK (That's me folks.) are 8th cousins 5 times removed. Their common ancestors are Henry SHERMAN and Agnes BUTLER.

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Although he was a native of Ohio, the name of Gen. William Tecumseh Sherman remains inextricably linked with Georgia. Born Feb. 8, 1820 in Lancaster, Ohio, he graduated from West Point as a second lieutenant in 1840. His first

tour of duty was in Florida in a campaign against the Seminole Indians. In 1844, Sherman was stationed for six weeks in Marietta, Ga. He later served an aide to a commanding general during the Mexican War. After three years of administrative duty in Washington D.C., Sherman resigned his commission and became a partner in a failed banking venture. In 1859, he accepted a position as superintendent of a new military academy in Baton Rouge (which later became Louisiana State University), but after Louisiana seceded in 1861, he resigned and offered his services to the U.S. Army. He was commissioned as an infantry colonel. His first action was in Battle of First Manassas (Bull Run) in July 1861. In July 1863, Sherman was promoted to brigadier general and named commander of the Army of the Tennessee. In this capacity, he contributed to the Union victory at the Battle of Chattanooga. On Nov. 26, 1863, as Confederate forces retreated into Georgia, Sherman was one of several commanders to briefly lead their corps across the Tennessee state line into Georgia in pursuit of the Confederates. His more noted foray, however, came on May 5, 1864, when he marched his army of close to 100,000 men into Georgia. With a force roughly half that size, Confederate Gen. Joseph E. Johnston did what he could to slow Sherman's advance. For three months the Confederate army tactfully engaged and retreated before Sherman's far superior numbers, until Johnston was replaced July 17 by Gen. John Bell Hood. Within six weeks, Confederate casualties had doubled, and on Sept. 1 Sherman occupied Atlanta. Intending to burn only buildings used for military purposes, his army set fires that raged out of control and destroyed much of the city. Sherman then launched his March to the Sea, with 60,000 of his most seasoned soldiers foraging off the land and cutting a swath of destruction through the heart of Georgia. On December 23, Sherman's forces occupied Savannah. After giving his army a rest, Sherman then proceeded on a path of destruction through South and North Carolina. Three weeks after Lee's surrender at Appomattox, Gen. Joseph

Johnston -- who was in command of all Confederate forces in the Carolinas, Georgia, and Florida -- gave his formal surrender to Sherman at Durham Station, N.C. on April 26, 1865. Though foes in battle, the Union and Confederate generals had earned each other's respect -- so much so that Johnston would later serve as a pallbearer at Sherman's funeral.

After the war, Sherman served as commander of the U.S. Army's Division of the Mississippi. In this role, he helped in the building of the trans-continental railroad by protecting the workers and trying to maintain peace with the Indians along the railroad's path. Under Pres. Grant, Sherman was named commanding General of the Army (1869-1883). After his retirement, Republicans tried to persuade him to run for President, but he repeatedly declined, noting, "If nominated I will not run. If elected I will not serve." Sherman spent his final years in New York City, where he died on Feb. 14, 1891.

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## Post Cards From The Past....



The postcard above shows Monument Square and Main Street in downtown Racine, Wisconsin looking northeast from Sixth Street. This postcard was from the early 1960's.

The post card below from 1916 shows the view in Racine, Wisconsin looking east toward Lake Michigan from the south side of Sixth Street. The streetcar was one of the main methods of transportation around the city. Tokens were used to pay for a ride.

