

Our Family News Letter

Issue 58

Greendale, Wisconsin

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Update on Balthasar & Thomas Heck

In the past few issues of "Our Family News Letter" we have been unfolding the story about two Heck brothers from Alendorf, Germany. The two brothers were the key link to showing how the Heck families in the United States are related to the Heck family living in Alendorf, Germany today.

Howard Heck from Minneapolis, launched an aggressive search for Heck relatives in Minnesota and South Dakota. Balthasar lived in Minnesota while Thomas lived about 25 miles away in South Dakota.



L-R: Balthasar and Thomas Heck in 1937.

Howard's search efforts have been well rewarded. Since he launched his search a few months ago he has been in contact with descendants of the two Heck brothers. Some sent him photographs and family history information.



Balthasar with his parents, Anna Maria Dries and Thomas Heck Sr. in about 1881.

Balthasar Heck married Josephine Voss on 30 June 1887. Balthasar and Josephine had nine children: Katherine, Joseph, Mary Josephine, John, Agnes, Anna Catharina, Teresa Rose, Josephine, and Margaret. Balthasar died in 1937, just 22 days after celebrating his 50th wedding anniversary.



Thomas Heck and Maria Elizabeth Wilmes wedding photo taken on 24 November 1886.

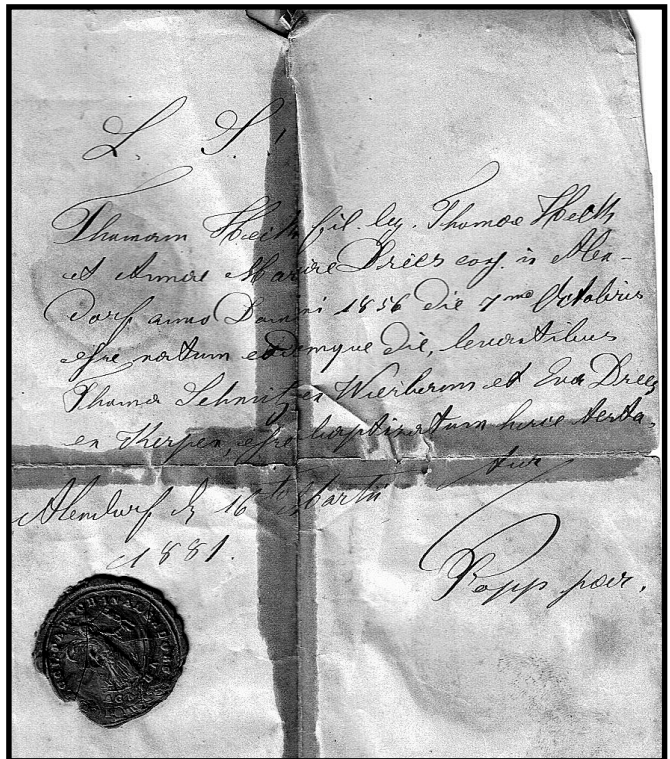
Thomas and Maria Elizabeth had nine daughters: Mary (Sister Consolata), Elizabeth M., Catherine Agnes, Anne Catherine, Margaret, Josephine, Clara, Gertrude and Theresa Mary Heck.

Thomas Heck's birth certificate, at right, was issued by the Pastor of the Catholic Church at Alendorf, Germany in 1881. The certificate states that Thomas was born on 7 October 1856 at Alendorf and was the son of Thomas Heck and Anna Maria Dries, his wife.

The birth certificate provides the link to the present day Heck family living at Alendorf.



Seven of the Heck daughters with their mother, Maria Elizabeth Heck. Standing, L-R, Catherine, Margaret, Anne, Elizabeth & Josephine. Front, L-R, Clara, Maria Elizabeth, and Gertrude. Not shown: Mary and Theresa.



Birth certificate for Thomas Heck issued in 1881, verifies the birth from 1856.

The seal on the certificate shows an angel and has the name St. Agatha at the bottom. That was



the name of the old Catholic church at Alendorf, Germany.

Shown above is the 50th wedding anniversary family photo of the Balthasar Heck and Josephine Voss family. The photo was taken on 30 June 1937. Balthasar died 22 days later. Top, L-R, children - Josephine, Anna, John, Joseph, Katherine, Mary, Agnes & Teresa.

More relatives will be found as time goes by.

Howard Heck is now in the process of writing an addendum to his original book "The Hecks From Alendorf, Germany" to include the "newly found" Heck relatives and to show the link to the Heck family living in Alendorf today.

Many thanks to our readers...

I would like to thank all of you for helping make "Our Family News Letter" a success. Articles and photos contributed really help make it interesting. Howard Heck's diligent work on discovering our many relatives requires the admiration of all of us. Special thanks go to Mary & Clarence Heck, Alvin & Carolyn Heck, Shirley Heck, Gary Heck, and Marv & Joanne Pfeiffer for their generous contributions.

Please remember that you are welcomed to make and distribute copies of this newsletter to your other family members. The newsletter now reaches 60 homes around the United States.

PJ Landrum Weds in SC



May 12, 2007, was the date for the wedding of PJ (Pamela Joan) Landrum, the daughter of Cindy & Dennis Landrum, and granddaughter of Gary and Carol Heck. PJ was married to Michael Henderson at Easley, South Carolina.

PJ works at Primary Care Associates in Anderson, SC. It is a family practice doctor's office. She is the phone operator and she works in the medical record area. Michael was employed by the Pike Electric Company but now works for PJ's Dad installing heating, ventilating, and air conditioning systems. Michael is attending Greenville Technical School to learn HVAC systems.

PJ and Michael purchased a house at Williamston, South Carolina, which is located within five minutes of their parents.

Jodi Brack Marries in SC



Jodi Brack, daughter of Carol and Gary Heck and Gary Brack, was married on May 5, 2007, to Chris Rothell at Seneca, South Carolina.

The young couple had a wedding reception following the wedding and a second reception at the Spinnakers Restaurant in Racine, Wisconsin on August 4th. This was the first visit to Wisconsin for Chris who came with clear instructions to be sure to bring some cheese back to South Carolina.

Memories From The Past by Alvin Heck Jr., 2007.

When Alvin was a very young boy living on Harriet Street in Racine, Wisconsin, he was frequently sent to the neighborhood Italian grocery store to buy a pack of Camels for his mother. The owners of the store knew him and his mother and always gave him the cigarettes without question.

A new brand of cigarettes was being marketed called "Marvels". His mother, Stella, sent Alvin to the grocery store for a pack of the new cigarettes and he was told that he could spend the extra few pennies on candy or on whatever he wanted.

Alvin came home with a big bag of "Marbles" and a few pieces of candy. He thought that was really neat that his mother sent him to the store to buy some marbles and some candy.

I understand that Aunt Stella stuck with Camels after that.

Do you have a short or long story to tell about your past memories? Why not share them with our readers? Just send them to me by snail mail or by e-mail at bheck@execpc.com

"Alendorf - A secret place in the Eifel within the Juniper Wildlife Preserve."

The postcard at the bottom of this page shows a great view of the Village of Alendorf, Germany. It gives a good perspective of how the village is surrounded by the Eifel Mountains and nestled in a valley. The tall white building on the left side is Saint Agatha's Catholic Church. Alendorf is the ancestral home of the Heck and Schaefer families. Johann Heck and his wife Anna Barbara Schaefer left Alendorf in 1853, for America with their five children: Peter, Anna Lucia, Henry, Joseph, and Clara.

Alendorf – ein Geheimtip in der Eifel inmitten des Wacholder-Naturschutzgebietes



Meet your distant cousins...



Meet the John Heck and Anna Ehrnst family. Standing L-R: Bartholomew born 1921, Richard born 1924, Theresa born 1933, Joseph born 1920, and Edward born 1928. Seated L-R: Thomas born 1926, Anna born 1895, John born 1893, and John (Jack) born 1923. John Heck died in 1965 and his wife Anna died in 1996. One child not shown was Bernard Heck born and died in 1932. The photograph of the family was taken in 1951.

The John Heck and Anna Ehrnst family lived in the Beardsley, Big Stone County, Minnesota area, near the South Dakota - Minnesota border.

The following story was written by Helen (Heck) Marabel for a family reunion in 2005. Helen is the daughter of Joseph Heck and Dorothy Serocki, and a granddaughter of John Heck and Anna Ehrnst.

"John Heck was born on 16 April 1893 in Saint Kilian, Minnesota. He moved to Barry, Minnesota with his parents, Balthasar and Josephine (Voss) Heck, at the age of nine. They resided on a farm near Barry, Minnesota from 1902 until 1917 raising cattle and milking cows, in addition to growing various grains.

Anna Mary Ehrnst was born on 24 June 1895 in Arthur Township, Minnesota. Her parents were Henry and Anna (Luken) Ehrnst. She attended Saint Mary's Catholic Church in Traverse County. She attended there from elementary through the eighth grade.

After their marriage on 25 February 1919, Anna moved in with John on his father's farm. John lived there until his death on 8 November 1965 at the age of 72. Anna lived a number of years after his death on the farm with her two sons, Tom and Ed. Eventually she moved to the Browns Valley Health Center in Browns Valley, Minnesota. She lived a full life to the age of 100.

During John and Anna's days, farming was done with the help of horses. At harvest time, threshing crews were hired to harvest the crops. The cows were milked by hand and cooking was done on a wood burning stove. In 1937, John purchased a Farmall F12 tractor. It had steel wheels on the back and was a \$650 investment. Eight acres could be plowed with it, which was significantly more than what could be done with the horses.

The farm is now (2005) owned by Ed and Tom Heck and has been in the family continuously for 103 years."

Helen (Heck) Marabel lives at 601 Pebble Beach Drive, Jacksonville, Texas 75766, Phone: (903) 586-9171, e-Mail: hmmara@suddenlink.net.

This newsletter is written and published by **Robert J. Heck, 4910 Steeple Drive, Greendale, WI 53129.**

Our Family News Letter is published quarterly and is distributed without charge. Contributions to help cover the costs are greatly appreciated. My e-mail address is **bheck@execpc.com**

A Letter From Germany

The following letter was written by Agnes from Germany to her brother, Balthasar Heck shortly after World War I. The letter is a translation of the German letter. It was probably written in 1920, 1921 or 1922. In the letter DM stands for Deutsche Marks or German Marks. Agnes Heck is thought to be the wife of Nicholas Meyer from Alendorf, Germany.

Letter from Mrs. Nikolas Meyer:

"My dear brother, sister-in-law and child and god-child,

Today it is 41 years that you left the dear homeland and today your good sister Agnes takes her pen to ask of you a sign of life. I have written several times but never received an answer. Maybe my letters never reached you on account of the War, which brought misery to us.

Sister Agnes is the only one living, everyone else of our family has died. Our sister, Magdalena died February 2, 1915. Margarete died on November 25, 1919. Our brother in-law died a few months later. The youngest, Balthasar, died in the War. Henry also died. In one year four have died. I, your sister and brother-in-law are well; our son was also in the War and was severely wounded.

Here in Germany everything is poor and expensive. The groceries are so high that one hardly can buy them. One lb. coffee cost over 100 Marks. I lb. yeast 50 D.M. and that is all what you can buy. 100 lbs. Of wheat cost 1000 D.M.. 100 lb. of oats cost more than 600 D.M. Clothing is hard to get. One suit cost more than 1000 D.M.

Last year we had a poor crop; we had terrible heat; could hardly make it; scarcely buy feed; the

cattle got sick with hoof and mouth disease. We lost in one year 8 head of cattle. One cow costs 2000 D.M. one little pig 6 weeks old, costs 1000 D.M. A fat pig, over 2 years old 6000 D.M. and above. We had to pay war debts, more than 2000 D.M. a year and in addition the prices are rising and the money has no value.

Near the Rhineland, where the occupation is, it seems to be especially trying. When the soldiers retreated, the Americans move in. We gave a letter to one of the American soldiers to establish contact with you but in vain. In Germany are no more soldiers.

We torn down the old parish house and built a new one and in 2 years we will build a new church. In spite of the distance, I remember you in my daily prayers at Hi. Mass. I hope we will meet again sometime, if ever possible -- but certainly in heaven.

Marie Meyer wrote to us once and inquired about you; She died last year. Joseph Meyer and Nickolaus are dead. I hope that you are still living. Please write to us and also to your God-child.

We heard nothing from brother Thomas. We had a very cold winter and it was very difficult to endure. My brother-in-law is still alive; he is old and feeble. Now I will close for today.

1000 hearty greetings from us all --- from your good sister and sister-in-law, Agnes. Special greets to my God-child. Please give us a sign of life; excuse my poor handwriting: we are old. Most sincere greetings."

It's a Small World...

Scarletta Schaefer from Oregon visited the Heck, Schaefer and Casper families in Alendorf, Germany in July, 2007. Her father, Scott, is a descendant from the Johann Schaefer family from the New Ulm, Minnesota area.

From the Photo Album...



Mary Ann Mikel and Robert Gerald Heck wedding, 29 June 1935, Racine, Wisconsin.



Gloria LaBerge, wife of Bob Heck, with her grandfather, Wilfred LaBerge at Ladysmith, Wisconsin and feeding cows in 1954.



The Village of Hannibal, Oswego County, New York. The Benjamin Burgess family lived there in 1835.

