

The Duehning Family

During the years of 2001 and 2002 I did extensive work researching the Duehning family working closely with several descendants within this family. It was a most fascinating search because of the interconnectedness of the Gehrkes and the Duehnings for a number of generations.

I happened on this search because I was contacted via email by Donna Schoening from Tucson, Arizona. This came by surprise. She was working on the Duehning family tree and some of her cousins like Linda Martin, Diane Mikles, Doug Duehning, Debbie Conn and Marty Thiel-Downs had "discovered" each other recently! Donna was interested in the "Gehrke connection." I am not sure how she found me. We did a lot of emailing, sharing of data, looking up new things and writing letters. It all was quite a fascinating journey and I enjoyed it very much. Included in this was a continued contact with Gayle Gehrke Bowman of Tucson, a Duehning cousin who is a direct Gehrke cousin of mine! She descends from Edward C. and Ottilia (Duehning) Gehrke. Edward and Ottilia are her great grandparents.

Since late summer 2002 we have not done much writing back and forth. I have done a little continued research by myself as it has helped fill out the Gehrke family history especially that of Edward C. and Ottilia (Duehning) Gehrke (my grandfather Frank G. Gehrke's brother and sister-in-law). I thought it would be good to document the info for my own use and perhaps others would be interested in what has been discovered so far. Hence this article has been developed.

The Duehning family seems to have known the Gehrke family in Pommern. Research in the Latter Day Saints church microfilms of church records shows that in the 1800s the Duehnings lived in Kannenberg, a close neighboring village of Hermelsdorf, Naugard, Pommern, where the Gehrkes lived. Hermelsdorf and Kannenberg were just east of Gollnow, and near the larger city of Stettin, though Kannenberg was in a different district or kreis called Saatzig, Pommern.

Ottilia's grandfather, Christian Friedrich Düning, pronounced like Duehning, also spelled in early records as Dünich and Dünig, and her grandmother, Maria Louise Rosenow were married October 18, 1811 in Kannenberg, Saatzig, Pommern. I found birth records of their eight children, though the last three in the family had Dorothea Louise Rosenow listed as the mother not Maria. Debbie Conn has since found three more born after Ferdinand. Maria must have also had Dorothea as a part of her name.

Franz Rosenow is Maria's father, and Dorothea Elizabeth Hannemann is her mother. Group sheets are available from me with as much data as I could collect on this family. Christian Frederick Duehning's children's births span from 1812 to 1832. It was interesting to note that my great grandfather William Gehrke's mother, Maria Sophia

Caroline Kell Gehrke, was a sponsor for one of Ferdinand's older siblings. Thus an early relationship between these two families began in Pommern and was to continue in America.

Ottilia's parents, August William Ferdinand Duehning (born in Kannenberg February 22, 1832 and went by Ferdinand) and Henrietta Johanna Friederica Giese (born October 16, 1828 in Karkow, Naugard, Pommern and went by Henriette), were married on May 18, 1852. This was the same year that our William Gottlieb Gehrke and Maria Charlotte Friedericke Bartelt (went by Charlotte) were married. I have a record where both couples' wedding bans are on the same page of the church record book.

Charlotte Bartelt, William Gehrke's second wife was fourteen years younger than he. Ferdinand and Henriette Duehning were a bit younger than Charlotte. Church records show the birth of at least four children to Ferdinand and Henriette Duehning in Pommern. These are: Auguste Wilhelmine Henriette born in Karkow, January 21, 1852 prior to their marriage, Henriette Louise Ottilia Duehning (went by Ottilia), born in Kannenberg January 7, 1854, and August Friedrich Duehning, born October 4, 1855 in Kannenberg. Albertine Emilie Duehning (Amelia)'s birth record was found by Debbie Conn as February 12, 1857 with a christening date of February 20, 1857 in the LDS films suggesting Amelia was born in Kannenberg. The US federal census of 1860 says she was age 2 in 1860 suggesting an 1858 birth. The 1870 Federal census says she is 11, suggesting an 1859 birth. So the records are somewhat confusing. Two children died young, Auguste, on August 2, 1852, in Karkow and August on November 8, 1855, in Kannenberg.

In spring of 1856 William and Charlotte Gehrke left Hermelsdorf with William's first family of children and two young sons of their own, Edward Carl (born in Hermelsdorf 1853) and Ernest William David (born in Hermelsdorf 1855). They sailed on the ship Saga from Hamburg on May 14, 1856 and arrived in New York in early summer. After getting to Wisconsin, they made their way from Milwaukee by wagon to the wilderness area in Marathon County to buy their farmland taking at least two weeks to travel from Milwaukee. Marathon County was just being settled and was very thickly wooded with huge pine trees and rough paths with very few roads. Family history says they stayed with others before constructing their own log cabin.

The Duehning family consisting of Ferdinand, Henriette, three year old Ottilia and baby Emilie followed as immigrants sailing on the Gulfstream ship leaving Hamburg on May 15, 1857. They joined the Gehrkes in Wausau Township (later divided into Berlin and Maine Townships.) They may have stayed with the Gehrkes in their early log cabin as various accounts tell how Ottilia and Edward played together as little children.

William Gehrke had purchased land in Wausau Township (later named Maine Township) on August 5, 1856. According to the land records in the Marathon County

Courthouse and also seen on the Federal patent website, Ferdinand Duehning began purchasing land for farming on December 1, 1858 in nearby Berlin Township a few miles from Gehrkes. Ferdinand continued to add to his property with additional purchases March 1, 1865 and April 18, 1870 at this site of his first purchase. A description of this Duehning land follows:

The Southeast quarter of the Southwest Quarter and the West half of the Southeast Quarter of Section no. twenty nine (29) in township no. thirty (30) North of Range Seven (7) East containing according to government survey one hundred and twenty acres of land. Dated March 1, 1865 it shows he bought the land from Marathon County for \$16.44.

While the Duehnings lived in Marathon County they had these additional children: Frank Ferdinand, born November 19, 1860 (did not find his birth recorded in the church records), August Herman, born March 10, 1862, Mary Louise, born August 13, 1864, Hanna Martha, born August 17, 1866, Anna Terese, born May 18, 1868, Therese Elizabeth, born November 19, 1870, Johann Otto, born September 16, 1872. These births are documented by the Wausau circuit German Methodist Episcopal Church records 1860-1917, and other family sources. Carl Frederick William, was born December 10, 1874 in Nebraska after they moved there. Why Frank's birth is not recorded is not known. The church records were scant in 1860 with very few births listed in the record. A pastor could have forgotten or neglected to record it, or maybe the child was not baptized or the family was attending another church at the time or the church had not yet formally organized to keep any consistent records.

The Duehnings participated in the life of the community, soon becoming active members of the fledgling German Methodist Church in Town of Maine in the early 1860s along with the Gehrke family. Other written articles done by family members mention their close friendship during this time.

It appears that Edward Carl (or Charles) Gehrke and Henriette Louise Ottilia Duehning began to be very good friends, and fell in love as teenagers. They became husband and wife on April 12, 1874, being married in the German Methodist Church in Maine Township as documented by Wisconsin state marriage records. The Gehrke family history written by Velma Odell Gehrke says that Edward and Ottilia's parent families moved out to Nebraska in 1868 and lived together as neighbors there. I have been unable to prove that Edward's parents, William and Charlotte Gehrke and all his younger siblings gave up their farm and moved out to Nebraska to homestead with the Duehnings. There appear to be no records of land sales showing that Edward's parents, William and Charlotte Gehrke sold their farm and left Marathon County for Nebraska. Instead I speculate that Edward went out there before his marriage maybe in 1872 or 1873 to see if he could buy land and probably he visited and stayed with relatives of his mother who had moved there earlier to homestead. David Bartelt was a relative of

mother Charlotte, possibly a brother, and David homesteaded in Nebraska. I have records of his homestead in Harlan County. During 1872/73 Ed may have written back to Ottilia as Velma writes about this letter exchange in her history.

Ferdinand Duehning sold his Marathon county land March 15, 1874 to Daniel Kuphal (also spelled Kufahl) right before Edward and Ottilia's marriage. We think the Duehnings joined Edward and Ottilia in moving west probably just after Ed and Ottilia's marriage to take up homesteading the land near Seward, Nebraska just east of Goehner. A recent contact with the Seward County Historical Society and the Seward Genealogical Society verifies the Nebraska land purchase in 1874 by both the Edward Gehrkes and the Ferdinand Duehning families. See map and letter about this. They were barely out there when a grasshopper plague hit their crops and the Gehrkes (not sure about the Duehning family) came back to Wisconsin for over a year to stay with family and earn money so they could go back.

Two children were born to the Edward Gehrkes while they were living back in Wisconsin, Samuel William Gehrke, born January 27, 1875, and Margareta Hellena Gehrke, born January 22, 1876. When Margaret was three months old Edward and Ottilia went back to Seward (possibly April 1876 as Margaret was baptized April 13, 1876 in Wisconsin according to Oldest Church Records Wausau Circuit that included the German Methodist Church in Maine Township) and took up farming where they left off. While in Wisconsin they may have lived with Edward's parents in the Town of Maine (William and Charlotte Gehrke). Edward worked in the area lumber camps, logging the pine trees while in Wisconsin for those years.

By late 1876 Great Grandfather William Gehrke was seriously ill and the call went out for my Grandfather, Frank Gottlieb Gehrke, age 18, to come back to Wisconsin to help out with the farm. Frank apparently had gone out with his brother Edward Gehrke and family to seek his fortune and help with the homesteading in Nebraska! My mother told this story to me many times. William died on January 7, 1877 in Marathon County and Frank stayed on working the home farm in Marathon County and caring for his mother, Charlotte. Land records show he officially became the owner of the home farm in 1881. Frank then married Bertha Ida Marie Sellin, on April 11, 1882. They raised ten children there with my mother Eleanor Henriette Gehrke being the ninth child and last girl born in the family.

Edward and Ottilia raised a family of fourteen children, though they lost three in early deaths in Nebraska. All but the first two were born in Nebraska according to census and family records. Edward and Ottilia continued to live on their Nebraska farm until about 1902. They had gotten the urge to go further west to the state of Washington to follow the advice of one of their pastor friends. Edward had gone to check out the situation in 1901. About in 1902 they moved to Edwall, Washington along with various other members of Ottilia's family and seven of Ed and Ottilia's own children (Martha,

Arthur, Ella, George, Fred, Frank and Harvey). Also in 1902 Ed and Ottilia's oldest son Samuel and his wife, Marie Cast Gehrke, joined Sam's parents by moving from Nebraska to live and farm just two miles south of Edwall. About in 1905 Margaret and her husband, Carl Allgaier and children moved to Spokane, WA. Jennie and her husband Dan Runty and family and Edward Gehrke and his wife, Mildred and later his wife Margaret Patten remained in Nebraska.

I recently received a map showing the farm properties the two Gehrke families and the Duehning family bought in the Edwall area. The Edward Gehrkes lived there until 1911 when they moved into the village of Edwall turning their farm over to the younger sons to manage. Their other children had scattered to many areas of the west and south. Various family members kept in touch for a while with their Wisconsin relatives. My mother and others in her family used to write to a few of the Gehrke children in the 1930s, 1940s and 1950s. Several of her cousins visited us when I was young, but the next generations lost track of each other. It has taken a long while to reconnect, hasn't it? Our genealogy hobby has helped put us in touch!

Ottilia's mother, Henriette Giese Duehning, died August 30, 1889 in Seward, Nebraska probably on the family farm. She is buried in the older Methodist cemetery near Goehner, formed from part of Edward and Ottilia's land. Debbie Conn was able to visit this area in summer of 2002, take pictures and add to the story. In the mid 1890's Ottilia's father, Ferdinand Duehning, moved to Mt. Tabor, Oregon to live with his daughter, Annie and her husband William Thiel. Ferdinand later moved to Spokane Washington to live with another of his daughters, Theresa and her husband Fred Allgaier. Ferdinand died in Spokane of cancer on July 31, 1905 and is buried in the Edwall cemetery, Lincoln County, Washington. The Duehning children scattered to live in various other states. Their history is now being rediscovered as we reconnect. I hope this reconnection will continue and all will enjoy the fun of rediscovery of their family.

Edward C. Gehrke died on December 11, 1913 in Sacred Heart Hospital in Spokane, WA and is buried in the Edwall cemetery, Lincoln Co. WA. Ottilia Gehrke lived until April 12, 1930 and also died in Spokane WA where she had lived after Edward died. She is also buried in the Edwall Cemetery.

An additional fascinating and interesting connection which has opened up for Debbie Conn is our finding of early Thiels in Marathon county, in the 1860 federal census and church records. We found a Charles or Carl Thiel and his family living there close to my Gehrke family and also neighbors to the Ernest Christian family, also a relative of mine on the Gehrke side. Debbie is able to trace her family back to these Thiels. The account of Judge Louis Marchetti of early Marathon county land development mentions a Thiel (Thiele) who settled there along with four Barteld (Bartelt) brothers, possible brothers of my Charlotte Bartelt. We think this Thiel is Karl Frederick

Thiel (Charles is the American form of Karl/Carl), born February 17, 1810 in Pommern. He is reported to have come with his son, **William Frederick Heinrich Thiel, born October 5, 1834, Pommern, to homestead in Marathon County. If they arrived in Marathon County in 1855, the son would have been 21 years old and ready for settling down himself. Wm. Fr. Heinrich married Minna Maria Sann (Wendland). They had a son, *William Carl Thiel, born May 17, 1867 near Wausau (we found this record as well as other records of Thiels joining the Methodist church etc.). This William Carl is Debbie's great grandfather! This *William Carl Thiel married Anna Theresa Duehning, sister to Ottilia on September 24, 1890 in Seward, Nebraska and later they came further west settling in Spokane!

The Thiel family had left the Wausau area and settled in Rockford, Iowa in the 1870s. **Note that William Frederick Heinrich Thiel died as a result of drowning in a well in Rockford, Iowa, April 5, 1872. His wife Minna died in 1934 in Rockford, Iowa. There were indicators in the Marathon County Methodist church records that the Thiel family left Wisconsin early as their names were lightly crossed off the earliest church membership rolls!

The other interesting thing I have discovered is that I know the farm Ferdinand and Henriette Duehning owned in Marathon County! A cousin of my mother, Sylvia Gehrke Nass, and her husband, Hugo Nass owned this farm. Sylvia is a descendant of my grandfather Frank Gehrke's sister, Emilie Gehrke. Sylvia and Hugo Nass ran the farm when I was a child. We spent time visiting there, getting eggs and chickens for our table! Sylvia and Hugo's daughter, Lois Nass Jorgensen, wrote some of her parent's history for the 1976 bicentennial book about Maine township, called Maine Mirrors. With the help of courthouse records and this article I was able to piece together the farm's history. Today it is operated as a huge dairy farm with the present day owners milking hundreds of cows and is known as the VanderGeest Farms.

Researched and written by Nan Krause, granddaughter of Frank and Bertha Gehrke and great granddaughter of William and Charlotte Gehrke, close friends of the Duehning family. January 2003 and revised June 2005, March 2007 and November 2009 and March 2010

Addendum on 3-1010 by Nan Krause

Further research in 2009/2010 by Nan Krause, Debbie Conn and other cousins reveals a number of additions and corrections made to the main body of the article and the following additions and corrections:

Christian Frederick Duehning and his wife Maria Louise or Dorothea Louise Rosenow had three additional children after Ferdinand's 1832 birth. The names are on the family group sheet. There apparently were not two wives for Christian Frederick as I at first thought. Debbie found information on this family and also Christian and Maria's parents with a few dates in the LDS microfilms. These are recorded on the ancestor chart and family group charts.

As you look at the paper labeled "Ancestor Chart" please note that you should add your own child from Ferdinand and Henriette's children to connect your line to this ancestor chart.

Ferdinand and Henriette apparently lost several young children while living in Wisconsin and Nebraska. Two are unaccounted for in either place: August Herman was born February 10, 1862 in Berlin Township and Hanna Martha was born August 17, 1866 also in Berlin Township according to early Wausau circuit church birth/baptism records in Marathon County. Their death dates have not been found to date. A two year old "Hannah" appears on the 1870 Berlin Township Federal Census but probably refers to Anna Theresa as she would have been two at that date. Had Hanna Martha lived to 1870 she would have been four years old on that census. In addition Johann Otto is born October 16, 1872 in Maine township Marathon County, Wisconsin and died August 12, 1879 while they lived in Goehner, Nebraska. His gravestone is in the Methodist Cemetery in Goehner.

Frank Ferdinand Duehning and his wife Sophia E. Schlichenmeier lived in Guthrie, Oklahoma, married about in 1886 and had four children. Frank died on December 17, 1935 in Guthrie, Oklahoma. Sophia died in October of 1947 and was buried on November 1, 1947. Both are buried in Summit View Cemetery Guthrie, Oklahoma.

Mary Louise Duehning and Cornelius Stutheit married on April 26, 1885 in Lancaster County, Nebraska and lived in several state of Washington communities and eventually Orange County, California. The Stutheits had eight children. Mary died Dec. 15, 1942 in Orange County, California. Cornelius died April 17, 1931 in Ribey, Alberta Canada. It is unknown where they are buried.

Anna Theresa (Annie) Duehning and William Thiel married in Lancaster County, Nebraska, perhaps either Seward or Lincoln on September 24, 1890, and later lived in Mt. Tabor, Oregon and also in Edwall, Washington, Helena, Montana, and Spokane, Washington. They had four children. Annie died on October 19, 1948 in Helena, Montana. William died September 18, 1952 in Spokane, Washington. She and William are buried in Fairmont Cemetery in Spokane, Washington.

Theresa Duehning and Fred Allgaier married on December 21, 1891 (or 1890?) in Lancaster County, Nebraska. They had four children. Theresa died in Spokane, Washington, September 2, 1951. Fred died August 5, 1942 in Spokane, Washington. Theresa and Fred are buried in Riverside Cemetery in Spokane.

William Carl Duehning, the last child and son of Ferdinand and Henriette Duehning was probably born in Goehner near Seward, Nebraska on December 10, 1874 and given the name Carl Friedrich William. He went by William. He married Caroline Louise Meyer (Carrie) on September 28, 1897 in Lincoln, Nebraska. William and Carrie had four children. He died June 1, 1958 in Seattle, Washington according to his death record from the state of Washington. Carrie died February 14, 1935. He and Carrie are buried in Greenwood Memorial Terrace cemetery, in Spokane, Washington.

Albertine Emilie Duehning (Amelia, also known as Ame) died on August 15, 1926 in Pasadena, California. She is buried in Mt. View Cemetery near Morning Side. She had been living in that area, was on the 1920 Federal Census with boarders. She worked in a box factory making candy boxes. We thought that Amelia never married though she is listed as a widow on this census.

Nan Krause with help from many Duehning Cousins
3-2010 & 5-2010

Sources for this article on separate sheet.

Sources for the article The Duehning Family

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4. Hamburg Ship Records for Duehning and Gehrke families
5. History of the German Methodist Churches of Merrill Wisconsin 1888-1964 1988 Centennial by Paul Nulton
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7. Latter Day Saints microfilms- 905022, 905023, and 1334595 for Hermelsdorf and Karkow Pommern
8. Marchetti, Louis History of Marathon County and its Representative Citizens Richard Arnold, Pub. 1913
9. Obituaries of family from the German newspaper Der Christliche Apologete located in the United Methodist Church historical library at Drew University in Madison, New Jersey
10. Obituaries from other newspapers- Independent Record Helene, MT 10/20/1948 and Davenport Times 4/18/1930
11. Oldest Methodist Church Records - Wausau Circuit 1860-1917
12. Personal visits by various cousins to various cemeteries and other places including overseas for information
13. Personal family records including photographs
14. Research and interviews by Gayle Bowman, Debra Conn, Nan Krause, Linda Martin, Donna Schoening and other kin
15. State of Wisconsin Vital Records
16. The Gehrke Family History by Velma Odell Gehrke 1981 original in LDS Library Salt Lake City UT
17. Township Histories for Maine (Maine Mirrors 1976) and Berlin (Berlin's Memories 1976) Marathon county Wisconsin
18. Township boundary changes from The Evolution of Townships 1849-1910 Marathon County Hwy. Dept. and plat maps of the townships located in the Marathon County Library, Wausau WI
19. Websites
 - Findagrave
 - Patent records from website www.glorerecords.blm.gov/PatentSearch/Default.asp
 - World Connect-Roots Websites