

## Descendants of Florentine Althaus

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### Generation 1

1. **FLORENTINE<sup>1</sup> ALTHAUS** was born on April 08, 1792 in Wunderthausen. She died in 1847 in Galion, Crawford, Ohio. She married Ludwig Riedesel, son of Johannes Riedesel and Maria Elisabeth Dienst, on February 08, 1818 in Wunderthausen. He was born on February 21, 1784 in Wunderthausen. He died in 1847 in Galion, Crawford, Ohio.

Notes for Florentine Althaus:

She was born in Haase Haus, which passed to her husband upon their marriage since she was the oldest child. In 1845, most of the family left Wunderthausen to go to America. They traveled on the ship "New York" out of Bremen, and landed in New York city on June 7, 1845. Her sister, Maria Elisabeth, had come to America years before, married Christian Gerhardt, and settled in Crawford County, Ohio. They joined them. Florentine and her husband died within a few years, reportedly in 1847-1848 in an epidemic.

Notes for Ludwig Riedesel:

He was born in Weymers Haus in Wunderthausen but married into Haase Haus. This was one of the smaller houses in the village. It was unusual for a man his age to emigrate, but the greater opportunities for his four sons (and already married daughter) may have been compelling. The house and property (meagre, I think) were sold to J. Daniel Müsse from Jochums Haus. Most of the family traveled to New York, landing on June 7, 1845. Son J. Ludwig had gone the year before, and they brought with them his fiance, Catherine Schneider. All settled in Crawford County, Ohio.

Ludwig and Florentine died around 1847-1848, reportedly in an epidemic of some kind (cholera?) along with their daughter-in-law and at least one grandchild. They were interred in a private cemetery probably belonging to the Gerhardts. Its identity is long lost but we are reasonably certain where it is.

Ludwig Riedesel and Florentine Althaus had the following children:

- i. **LUDWIG HEINRICH<sup>2</sup> RIEDESEL** was born on July 12, 1818 in Wunderthausen. He died on July 30, 1894 in Wheatland, Clinton, Iowa (St. Paul's Cemetery, Wheatland). He married (1) **MARIA AMALIA RIEDESEL**, daughter of Johann Franz Riedesel and Florentine Beitzel, on August 08, 1841 in Wunderthausen. She was born on June 16, 1822 in Wunderthausen. She died about 1848 in Galion, Crawford, Ohio. He married (2) **ELISABETH SCHUMACHER**, daughter of Daniel Schumacher and Susan Seanor, on November 21, 1854 in Galion, Crawford, Ohio. She was born on October 02, 1831 in Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania. She died on April 05, 1887 in Wheatland, Clinton, Iowa (St. Paul's Cemetery, Wheatland).

Notes for Ludwig Heinrich Riedesel:

Known as L. Henry in America. Born in Haase Haus in Wunderthausen. Came to Crawford County, Ohio in 1845 with his parents, wife and two known children, three siblings, and the fiance of his brother, J. Ludwig, who came here in 1844. They arrived in New York on June 7, 1845. The families lived first near Galion, Ohio. An epidemic (presumably cholera or influenza, and certainly not "the plague") claimed the lives of the older couple, Henry's wife Amalia, and their daughter Anna. As of the 1850 census, he was living with his older son in the household of Franz and Anna Homrighausen. 2-year old John was living with the Christian Gerhardt family. Henry and Franz are listed as farmers though with no stated real estate value (they didn't own the land).

In 1852 (later than previously believed), Henry and his brother, George, walked from Ohio to Iowa to purchase land. A Davenport-based land agent took them to the area that was to become Wheatland in the Spring Rock Township of Clinton County. Before returning to their families, they walked to Iowa City to register the deeds. The story is that the land cost less than they expected so they could afford to return by river boat rather than walking; this took them down the Mississippi and then up the Ohio River. Henry and his family actually moved to Wheatland in 1855. The 100-year anniversary history of St. Paul's Church says that L. Henry

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## Generation 1 (cont.)

and Elisabeth came in 1852 but this seems incorrect since Crawford County marriages say the marriage took place on November 21, 1854, which we will take as authoritative. Henry was naturalized on the same date--November 21, 1854--at Galion.

Others in the family bought land and moved to Wheatland. The town was officially founded in 1858 when the railroad came through. Prior to this time, it was very much an open frontier with limited communications and transportation to the outside world. Life was tenuous. In 1863-1864, several children from the Riedesel and Dürr families (and probably others) died of diphtheria.

Henry was a founder of the German Reformed Church in Wheatland (St. Paul's) and served as one of the first Trustees in 1861. He donated the initial half acre for the cemetery of St. Paul's Church. His land was to the north and east of Wheatland, and most of it has remained in family hands. Before the founding of St. Paul's in 1861, he is recorded as a founding member of a German Reformed congregation or community (Gemeinde) in 1857. In 1878, Henry built a new house to replace the cabin in which they had lived since coming to the area. He bought and sold land over the years but the core of his farm was in Section 10 of the Spring Rock Township immediately adjacent to Wheatland. He and two of his brothers were the only Wunderthausen emigrants to receive "patents" on their land, meaning they were the first (white) owners.

Notes for Maria Amalia Riedesel:

Although her parents did not marry, Maria Amalia was apparently known as Riedesel. This was the name recorded at the time of her marriage. Her father's identity was acknowledged though what became of him is not known. Numerous other secondary sources give her name as Beitzel. This is not wrong in a technical sense but I am opting for the name she was evidently known by. She came with her husband, two children and the extended Riedesel family to New York, landing on June 7, 1845. We know only that she died in 1847-1848 in some kind of epidemic.

- ii. ANNA ELISABETH RIEDESEL was born on April 30, 1820 in Wunderthausen. She died on June 12, 1909 in Big Rock, Clinton, Iowa (St. Paul's Cemetery, Wheatland). She married Johann Franz Homrighausen, son of Georg Ludwig Homrighausen and Maria Elisabeth Haase, on January 21, 1844 in Wunderthausen. He was born on July 06, 1814 in Wunderthausen. He died on February 27, 1907 in Wheatland, Clinton, Iowa (St. Paul's Cemetery, Wheatland).

Notes for Anna Elisabeth Riedesel:

Born in Haase Haus in Wunderthausen. Came to America with the Riedesel family, arriving in New York on June 7, 1845 (the ship appears to have been the New York). After about a dozen years near Galion, Ohio, the Homrighausen family moved on to the Wheatland area. She was the mother of 11 children but I have names of only seven.

Notes for Johann Franz Homrighausen:

Known as Franz. Born in Räderhaase/Haasebergers Haus in Wunderthausen. He apparently served some time in the Prussian army as he was later a member of a German veterans association in nearby Lowden. Came to Crawford County, Ohio with the extended Riedesel family. They had arrived in New York out of Bremen on June 7, 1845. The family moved on to what became the Wheatland community by 1857. According to the 1911 memorial booklet celebrating the 50th anniversary of the founding of St. Paul's church in Wheatland, he had been a founder of the previous congregation in 1857.

By the time of his death, he owned 536 acres of farmland at Wheatland (in Sections 27, 28 and 33 of the Spring Rock Township). He was clearly a prosperous farmer and a respected elder in the German community and church.

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## Generation 1 (cont.)

Though his two wives had the same given names, they were not that closely related. His one child with his first wife died a few months after she did in 1843.

The three sons each took over part of his substantial farm.

- iii. JOHANN LUDWIG RIEDESEL was born on August 05, 1822 in Wunderthausen. He died on January 12, 1910 in Clinton, Clinton, Iowa. He married Catherine Schneider, daughter of Johann Georg Schneider and Luise Florentine Wetter, on July 01, 1845 in Galion, Crawford, Ohio. She was born on September 21, 1823 in Wunderthausen. She died on September 22, 1894 in Glidden, Carroll, Iowa.

Notes for Johann Ludwig Riedesel:

Christened Johann Ludwig, but known as J. Ludwig. He was born in Haase Haus in Wunderthausen. He traveled to New York on the ship Lesmona out Bremen, landing on June 24, 1844. He was in the company of his first cousin, Ludwig Dürr and aunt Elisabeth Althaus (Dürr's mother). Their destination was Crawford County, Ohio around Galion. How they traveled there is a matter of speculation but river boats (Erie Canal, Ohio Canal) are a good guess. Their aunt and uncle, Maria (Althaus) and Christian Gerhardt, had settled there with others in the Gerhardt family a decade earlier.

In 1845, his parents, siblings and fiancée, Catherine Schneider, left for America as well. J. Ludwig and Catherine remained in Ohio until 1855 when they moved on to the Wheatland, Iowa area. He had been naturalized on November 21, 1854, at Galion. Before the founding of St. Paul's in 1861, he is recorded as a founding member of a German Reformed congregation or community (Gemeinde) in 1857. He farmed in Section 32 of the Liberty township of Clinton County, north of Wheatland and at some remove from his brothers there. In 1881, they moved again to a place north of Glidden, Iowa. At the end of his life he was living with his daughter, Florentine Beckman in Wheatland, but died at a hospital in the county seat of Clinton. J. Ludwig is buried in the Merle Hay (West Lawn) Cemetery at Glidden.

"The History of Clinton County, Iowa" by Lucius P. Allen published in 1879. LUDWIG RIEDESEL, farmer, Section 32; owns 160 acres of land, valued at \$35 per acre; born in Germany in 1822; came to America in 1844, and located in Ohio; removed to Iowa in 1855; and located in this county; in 1868, settled on his present farm. Married Catherine Snyder in 1845; she, too, was born in Germany; have eight children--Susan, Franz, Ludwig, Phillip, Flora, George, John and Anna. Are members of the German Reformed Church; Democrat.

Notes for Catherine Schneider:

She was born in Althäusers Haus in Wunderthausen. In 1845, she traveled with the extended Riedesel family to New York, arriving on June 7. They made their way to Crawford County, Ohio in a month's time or less, as Catherine and J. Ludwig were married there on July 1. Their family settled near Wheatland in 1855 though moved on to Carroll County, Iowa around 1880. She appears to have been a rather small woman.

- iv. GEORG LUDWIG RIEDESEL was born on January 12, 1825 in Wunderthausen. He died on January 16, 1901 in Wheatland, Clinton, Iowa (St. Paul's Cemetery, Wheatland). He married Elizabeth Gerhardt, daughter of Christian Gerhardt and Maria Elisabeth Althaus, on February 16, 1860 in Galion, Crawford, Ohio. She was born on October 09, 1841 in Galion, Crawford, Ohio. She died on October 14, 1926 in Wheatland, Clinton, Iowa (St. Paul's Cemetery, Wheatland).

Notes for Georg Ludwig Riedesel:

Known as George. Born in Haase Haus in Wunderthausen. He came to New York with his family, landing there on June 7, 1845. They all settled in Crawford County, Ohio. George went (further) west in 1852 with his brother, L. Henry, to buy land. He was naturalized on November 21, 1854, in Galion. As of the 1850

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## Generation 1 (cont.)

Census George was living on the farm of a Joseph Albright as a laborer; this was in the Whetstone township to the west of the other Riedesels.

Though he owned land at Wheatland, he and his wife apparently did not move there until around 1869. In 1873, his in-laws came to Wheatland as well. In fact, the Gerhardtts bought land from George in 1873. George was quite active in buying and selling land. The main property and house were in Section 10 (extending into Section 3) of the Spring Rock Township.

"The History of Clinton County, Iowa" by Lucius P. Allen published in 1879. GEORGE RIEDESEL, farmer, Sec. 10; P. 0. Wheatland owns 200 acres of land, valued at \$55 per acre; son of Ludwig and Flora Riedesel; born January 12, 1825, in Germany. In 1845, emigrated to Crawford Co., Ohio; in 1850, came to Iowa, and entered the land upon which he now lives; in the spring of 1870, moved his family from Ohio, and located on his farm, Married Miss Elizabeth Gerhardt in February, 1860; she was born in Crawford Co., Ohio, in 1834 ; have six children living: Mary J., Anna M., Elizabeth S., Louisa L., John F., Louis T. ; lost one, John . Members of German Reformed Church."

- v. JOHANN PHILIPP RIEDESEL was born on September 24, 1826 in Wunderthausen. He died on February 28, 1828 in Wunderthausen.
- vi. JOHANNES RIEDESEL was born on March 30, 1829 in Wunderthausen. He died on December 09, 1908 in Wheatland, Clinton, Iowa (St. Paul's Cemetery, Wheatland). He married Elisabeth Knoche, daughter of Georg Ludwig Knoche and Maria Magdalena Schneider, on July 07, 1859 in Wheatland, Clinton, Iowa. She was born on October 03, 1835 in Wunderthausen. She died on September 25, 1923 in Wheatland, Clinton, Iowa (St. Paul's Cemetery, Wheatland).

Notes for Johannes Riedesel:

Known as John. Born in Haase Haus in Wunderthausen. He came to America with his family, landing in New York on June 7, 1845. They went immediately to Crawford County, Ohio. John came to stay in Wheatland in 1857. As of the 1860 Census, he and his wife were living on the same farm as his brother, J. Ludwig. It shows his real estate holdings as being worth \$1,704 (though he was a "farm laborer") while Ludwig's was only \$540. John was the first of his brothers to become a naturalized citizen, doing so on October 19, 1852, in Galion.

John acquired his land by "patent" (directly from the federal government) in May 1854. He eventually had land in both Sections 3 and 4 of the Spring Rock Township.

The date of his death has been mis-recorded by me among others. Even his gravestone gives the wrong year (1909 instead of 1908). The best proof of the December 9, 1908 date is the obituary published a few days later in the Wheatland Gazette.

"The History of Clinton County, Iowa" by Lucius P. Allen published in 1879. JOHN RIEDESEL, farmer-Sec. 3; P. 0. Wheatland ; owns 160 acres of land, valued at \$50 per acre, son of Ludwig and Flora Riedesel; born March 31, 1829, in Germany; in 1845, emigrated with parents to Crawford Co., Ohio ; in 1853. came to Clinton Co., Iowa, and entered his land from Government, after which he returned to Ohio. remaining till the spring of 1857, when he returned to Iowa. Married Miss Elizabeth Knoche, July 7, 1869, ; she was born in Germany, in 1839 ; have six children: Dina, Ferdinand, Emma, Kate, Ann and an infant son not named. Member of the German Reformed Church; Democrat.

Notes for Elisabeth Knoche:

Born in Hanphilippes house. She came to America aboard the "Johann Schmidt" out of Bremen, arriving in New Orleans on June 1, 1857. On the ship's list she is named as Elisabeth Schneider. After John's death, she continued to live on a farm

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### Generation 1 (cont.)

with several of their unmarried children. By 1905 this was a smaller piece of land that had been owned by his brother George (whose son-in-law, August Kramer, came to own much of John's original land). Elizabeth had taken her father's name even though the parents were not married.

- vii. JOHANN GEORG RIEDESEL was born on January 02, 1834 in Wunderthausen. He died on March 09, 1841 in Wunderthausen.
- viii. INFANT RIEDESEL was born on March 24, 1836 in Wunderthausen. He died on Prob. March 24, 1836 in Wunderthausen.

#### Notes for Infant Riedesel:

The child's birth is not to be found in the church records, though is known through family tradition. It was almost certainly a stillbirth.