

The Passing of a Pioneer.

Franz Homrighausen was born July 26, 1814, in Wunderthausen, Germany, and died February 27, 1907 at the home of his grandson, John Strackbein, south of Wheatland.

He was married in January, 1844, to Miss Anna Elizabeth Riedesel, in Germany, and the following year they came to America, settling in Crawford county, Ohio, where they lived until 1855. At that time Iowa was considered the "far west" and they came to make their home on the broad sparsely settled prairies, where the red men and deer were far more numerous than the white man and his cows. Their first place of residence was on the knoll near the present site of the Milwaukee depot, but he moved later to the farm south of town among the hills. There they lived and prospered, rearing their children in God's ways, accumulating and turning the broad acres to a height of productiveness, so that the weight of years bore lightly on them.

He was considered a man in the prime of life before Wheatland was accorded a place on the map, before any railroad reached this far west, he has watched with interest the growth of this town and state from its infancy, when the never-ending cry of "westward, ever westward," called many of his old pioneer friends, he remained here, satisfied that old Iowa was good enough for him. Many are the little incidents concerning him related by some of the older residents, who knew him when he was a "young" man of rugged build and surprising strength. S. L. Rogers, the first man to start a store in Wheatland, tells of one occasion when Franz was hauling the first stock of goods for the new store, how his team of oxen were stuck in the mud with their load, and then how on a wager, he shouldered a big barrel of molasses and carried it some distance to the store. These little incidents are still as fresh in the minds of the old residents as at the time they occurred.

He was one of the first members of the German Reformed church of this place, and reared his children in the same belief. He was the father of six children, five of whom survive him. The surviving ones are Mrs. Kate Holmes of Washington state, Mrs. Maria Strackbein, of near Big Rock, Franz H., of near Big Rock, Louis P., of Davenport, John P., of near this place. Mrs. Susan Kroh, another daughter, died a few years ago. He is also survived by his aged wife and a number of grandchildren.

The funeral services were conducted by Rev. J. Link at the home Saturday afternoon at one o'clock, the remains then being brought to the German Reformed church here, where second services were held, burial taking place in the High German cemetery.

He was also a member of the Lowden Krieger-Verein, and they had charge of the funeral. C. F. Steffens, W. Struck, G. Homrighausen, L. Strackbein, H. Edler and F. Fuchs were pall bearers. Other members of the organization present were Nicholas Von Ahnen, Chas. Krenz, H. Kohlhoff, F. Dienst, W. Boettger, H. Dickel, H. Handorf, C. Remking, Sr., F. Froesch, J. Deineger, H. Busch, G. Fieke and P. Muls.

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The length and detail of this obituary reflect his stature in the local community. They had a seventh child, a daughter, who died in the 1850s or 1860s. His three sons all took over parts of his substantial farm holdings.

Homrighausen had an earlier wife and daughter in Wunderthausen who both died in 1843.

Notes by Dr. Paul Riedesel