



# The Colony Penn

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*Black-Eyed Susans, Samuel F. Heim Prairie Garden*

FROM THE *SUNDAY JOURNAL AND STAR*, FEATURE SECTION, LINCOLN, NEB., FEBRUARY 19, 1951

## Pioneers' Standards Are Kept . . .

**Dawson German Unit Loses Last Original Member** —by *Anne Rush Riley*

Dawson, Neb.—In the passing of Mrs. Martin D. [Sophia Heim] Ulmer, Jan. 31, Dawson lost the last surviving member of the original German [Pennsylvania Dutch] colony which came to Richardson county from Pennsylvania in 1874. Mrs. Ulmer died in the fulness of her years: she was 82.

Mrs. Ulmer's death ended a saga of travel, settlement, industry, thrift and honesty.

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LIKE ALL SMALL towns Dawson lays emphasis on its racial backgrounds. The grandson or granddaughter of an early settler is regarded in the light of his or her ancestors' achievements. Consciously or unconsciously the third and fourth generations of these German settlers have maintained the solid standards of the pioneers and have given a splendid accounting of themselves. Among them are doctors, teachers, lawyers, artists, civil engineers, businessmen and musicians. Among the best is the young pianist, Ernest Ulmer, now of New York, who presented piano concerts in Omaha and Lincoln and other towns in Nebraska within the last two years. However, the general trend of the colony has been toward farming and in that calling they have set up standards as scientific operators, successful landowners and cattlemen.

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IT WOULD BE TOO much to say that this [current] restless artificial showmanship and social discontent has made no impression on the latest generation; but somehow these young German Americans seem safely anchored to the ideals of home and family life and—best of all—inherited religious tendencies which are bound to serve as a bulwark against the ills of the atomic age.

Fortunately the melting pot, which is Nebraska (and the United States) has brought about the amalgamation of the various races without obliterating the culture peculiar to each race. Indeed it is largely to this varied culture that America owes its greatness. These German colonists from Pennsylvania have provided a distinct flavor to all community projects.

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MRS. ULMER was a charter member of Dawson's first woman's club, which subsequently became the Golden Rod Study club, alive



**Sophia Heim Ulmer**  
c. 1920

and alert today. At a meeting of the present Dawson Woman's club two years ago special attention was given to pioneers and pioneer experiences, stretching back to the little Pennsylvania town from which "Aunt" Rosa Heim came. Aunt Rosa, my near and dear neighbor, is in her 80's. She came to Nebraska seven years after the original colony arrived. She was asked to tell the assembled ladies about the process of making apple butter. Her listeners were fascinated—even the teenagers from school who had furnished music for the afternoon's program. To this listener the dominant thought—as Aunt Rosa talked—was . . . "What patience they had!" We want everything done in a hurry—that was an all day, and sometimes an all night job.

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AT THIS RECENT meeting several antiques were shown to illustrate how well these early Pennsylvanians managed with almost primitive equipment. A blanket made of wool from sheep grown on the owner's land, and processed by him to the final stitch in the shawl, was a beautiful article. A coffee grinder, a music box with records resembling our phonograph records, produced sweetly plaintive music. Intricately woven baskets and substantial earthenware symbolized the thoroughness of method and provident traits of these pioneers.

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THE COLONY has borne a large share in building and maintaining a fine church—the Evangelical United Brethren—and there is always musical talent available for choir, men's and women's choruses, cantatas and recitals. Music seems to have been as deeply imbedded in their natures as are their thrift and honesty. They cooperate 100 percent in every project for (continued on page 5)

This article from 1951 is reproduced from a clipping found in Ruth (Heim) Brown's scrapbook, including the same headline and format of the original. The author, Anne Rush Riley, wife of Dawson banker Dan J. Riley, grew up in Omaha and was a longtime leader in the civic and cultural affairs of Dawson. She was loved and highly respected by both the Catholic and Protestant communities.

**THE COLONY PENN****EDITOR**

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Shirley Heim Pierce

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provider and employer.****Charol and Dan Pleiss****President's Letter**

The Penn Colony relies on your financial support. Your Board tries to be good stewards of your donations. We are grateful for your generosity. Initially we acquired four acres and a house with deep historical roots to the Penn Colony. The house went through a costly renovation and now is the showplace displaying many Penn Colony artifacts. The dream was always there for a museum building. With your support,

this dream was realized when the museum building was dedicated last year and is providing a place for display of the Penn Colony history and the history of the Dawson community. It is also serving as a gathering place for the Penn Colony and the entire Dawson community. Many have come together to share their memories at reunions, anniversary, and graduation celebrations. In each issue of *The Colony Penn* we recognize our financial donors. Without their support we would not be where we are today. A heartfelt thank you to all of our donors.

In addition to the financial support, a tremendous amount of volunteer time has been provided to the Penn Colony. This support is priceless and a labor of love. Thanks to all for your time and efforts.

We have recently concluded another fiscal year for the Penn Colony and celebrated another annual picnic reunion. Calendar-wise, we are approaching the end of another year. With this, we are grateful for all of our blessings. May each of you have a joyful holiday season. —**Dan Pleiss**

*A poignant moment occurred during the Sunday business meeting when Robert Williamson rose to pay tribute to President Dan Pleiss and Charol for their many years of selfless dedication to the Colony, pointing out that the restoration of the Henry Heim House and the construction of the museum building would not have been accomplished without their leadership and sacrifice. His sentiments were echoed by the applause of the group.*

**DONATIONS**

The following funds have been received since the last issue of the newsletter was published. Thanks to all who contribute in any way to support the Pennsylvania Colony.

**Donations:**

- Ron Blevins, \$100, in memory of his grandmother Bertha Heim Shively
- Kerry Dowdell, \$50, In honor of Keith Heim and Shirley Pierce for their excellent work on the newsletter
- David A. Heim, \$50, in memory of John & Vera Triggs Heim
- Joe & Michelle Heim, \$10
- Kent & Ann Knudsen, \$50
- Mark & Lorrie Novak, \$20
- Malcolm & Mary Oliver, \$25, in memory of Miriam Wuster Williams
- Ivan & Nona Walker, \$50
- Robert H. Weber, \$100, in memory of Marjorie Klima Weber

**Grant:**

- Richardson County Visitors Committee, \$550, for newsletter and website expenses

**Our Readers Write...**

Dear Cousins all:

I write with regrets that Emily and I will not make the Picnic this year.

The July newsletter was of real interest since my Grandmother's picture was in it. The article, "Making an impression," was of interest also, as my Mother, Evelyn Shively Blevins, often ate bread and milk for a meal. Now I know where this came from.

Enclosed are my membership dues and a donation towards your continued success, in honor of my Grandmother, Bertha Heim Shively. I have items for donation to the museum when I make the trip back to Dawson, one being Bertha's High School graduation certificate from Dawson in 1900.

—**Ron Blevins**

Penn Colony:

I was surprised and pleased to see the yearbook photos of the Dawson high schoolers of 1914 on the front page of your newsletter. My mother (Mabel Ulmer) was one of those pictured. She never shared any pictures of her childhood with any of her five sons (to my knowledge). We grew up during the great depression and she most likely had little time to share her childhood stories with us.

With thanks to Ruth Heim Brown for the use of her yearbook.

—**Richard Ulmer Sloan**

*Ron Blevins writes from Powell, Wyoming;  
Richard Sloan from San Diego, California.*



# Penn Colony reunion held at new site

Over the past 93 years, the Pennsylvania Colony has held its annual picnic/reunion in a number of venues—members' homes and yards, groves, parks, public buildings—and this year, for the first time, it met on Sunday, August 9th at the new colony/community museum just outside Dawson. Sixty-seven descendants of the settlers who came to Dawson in the 1870s and 1880s enjoyed a dinner catered by Ricky's Cafe and spent the afternoon renewing acquaintances and touring the museum and the nearby Henry Heim house, which has been restored by the Colony.

Genevieve Ulmer Young, 93, of Humboldt was the oldest member present. Her family swept the awards with 15 month old Zeke Chandler, son of Darlene Chandler, being the youngest. The Charles Young family of Arcadia, California travelled the farthest. Four generations of the Young family were in attendance.



**Genevieve Ulmer Young (seated) with her sons and their families. From left: Dee and Wayne Young, Debbi and Chuck Young, Darlene Young Chandler, Zeke Chandler, Barrett Young.**

The Board of Directors meeting was held the Saturday preceding the picnic in the new museum building. At the Sunday business meeting, Doug Brown was elected as a director, and it was decided to change the dates of future reunions to the first weekend in August.



**Directors of Penn Colony and interested Colony members attend the summer meeting of the board.**

The annual watermelon feed, held on the museum grounds on Saturday evening, attracted 30 members. Joe Heim (right) of Dawson gave the traditional "memorial moment" at Sunday services at the First Christian Church in Humboldt.



**What better place for a boy on a sunny summer day? Nathan Epley climbs the big tree in the front yard of the Henry Heim House.**

## Attendees at the picnic from Nebraska:

**Dawson:** Joe and Michelle Heim, Mark, Lorrie and Natalie Novak, Dick and Marilyn Ogle, Scott, Kris, and Lauren Ogle, Dennis and Robin Thacker, Bob and Phyllis Williamson. **Douglas:** Dan Dallmann. **Grand Island:** Kristin Eckhardt. **Humboldt:** Glenn and June Hayward, Karen Krofta, Gail Masonbrink, Genevieve Ulmer Young. **Lincoln:** Scott, Cindy, Jacob, Josh and Sophie Callaway, Keith Heim, Jodi Hermes, Carol Houborg, Allen and Darlene Myers, Virginia Myers, Alex Shorney, Jim Shorney. **Norfolk:** Margaret Ruth Heim Brown. **Omaha:** Kent Knudsen, Doug and Judy Heim, Dan and Charol Pleiss.

## Attendees at the picnic from out of state:

**Arizona:** Neil and Margaret Thacker, Mesa. **California:** Darlene and Zeke Chandler, Charles and Debbi Young, Arcadia. **Iowa:** Lloyd and Donna Epley, Coralville; David and Nathan Epley, Indianola; John Heim, Marion; John, and Susie Latusek, Dike; Debbie Bryant, Oxford. **Kansas:** Sam and Wanda Bilsing, Brenda Bilsing Lenz, Lawrence; Doug, Jenny, Jacob and Delaney Edwards, Olathe; Wayne, Dee and Barrett Young, Paola; **Minnesota:** Doug Brown, Minneapolis. **Oregon:** Neal and Shirley Pierce, Salem.



**First time attendees Carol Houborg (right) and daughter Jodi Hermes (left) chat with Donna Epley and Keith Heim.**

# 2015 Penn Colony Statistics Report

by John Fiala

Early in 2002 we began entering genealogical data from many sources into a database supported by what is now RootsMagic computer software. Presently, data has been gathered for 5,914 names, and 2,057 families. The information in the database is available for viewing at the Penn Colony Museum in Dawson, Nebraska. It is also on the Colony website, though the data is limited, as living persons are not named; they are identified solely by the word "Living." Please submit new information, or events not previously reported, to Evie Grubb, the Colony's new genealogist. A new form that makes it easy to report events was published in the summer newsletter. Copies of the form are also available at the museum, or can be obtained by contacting the editor. In the events reported below:

- The original migrant couple is shown in bold print.
- The year of migration to Dawson area is shown by names.
- The order of descendant names now has the direct descendant of the preceding ancestral level listed first on a line.
- All female spouses generally are listed with their maiden name. If a female is listed as a death, and was married, the married name and maiden name are listed.

## **Jacob G. Heim (1874) and Regina Gross (1874)**

**Samuel Franklin Heim(1874) and Elizabeth Heim(1882)**

Alden, Raelynn Leigh born 28 Feb 2014 to Jiana Keefer and Reid Alden.  
Martin, Wade Louis born 25 Sep 2014 to Joshua Ethan Martin and Minjung Jung.

Belden, Dorthy Pitch, spouse of Harry S. Belden died 13 Nov 2014.  
Belden, Harry S. died 15 Mar 2015.

## **Jonathan W. Heim (1874) and Louisa Shafer**

Zanetti, Luke Joseph born 15 Aug 2014 to Catherine Marie Kruesi and Joseph David Zanetti.

## **John Gross (1879) widower of Dorothy Wagner**

**John Sippley (1879) and Rosina Gross (1879)**

**Ellen E. "Ella" Sippley (1879) and Max Rudolph Georgi**  
Georgi, Lynn A. died 10 Jan 2015.

## **David Wagner (1880) and Christina Eckard (1880)**

**Reuben John Wagner (1880) and Lillian May DeWeese**  
Elwonger, Earl Dean died 22 Nov 2014.

## **Johnnie Heim (1880) and Margaret Heim (1881)**

**Regina D. Heim (1881) and Henry W. Heim (1883)**  
Knocke, Sherry Denise Rock died 21 Jul 2014.

## **Johnnie Heim (1880) and Margaret Heim (1881) (continued)**

**Jonas August Heim (1881) and Ida May Emerson**  
Heim, Dorothy Ione McArtor died 29 Jan 2015.

## **John J. Heim (1882) and Rosina Heim (1882)**

**Elizabeth Heim(1882) and Samuel Franklin Heim(1874)**

Alden, Raelynn Leigh born 28 Feb 2014 to Jiana Keefer and Reid Alden.  
Martin, Wade Louis born 25 Sep 2014 to Joshua Ethan Martin and Minjung Jung.

Belden, Dorthy Pitch, spouse of Harry S. Belden died 13 Nov 2014.  
Belden, Harry S. died 15 Mar 2015.

## **Mary Louisa Heim (1882) and Clarence William Stratton**

Brazau, Larry E., spouse of Susanne Constantine died 23 Jun 2015.

## **Israel L. Heim (1882) and Gertrude Draper**

Heim, Layla Marie born 9 Oct 2012 to Peter Bjorling Heim and Sarah Lee Duncan.

Ross, Quentin Damien born 9 May 2013 to Carrie Lynn Heim and Jason Damien Ross.

Ross, Aniyah Lynn born 9 May 2013 to Carrie Lynn Heim and Jason Damien Ross.

Haymaker, Carter Easton born 6 Jul 2014 to Elizabeth Anne Heim and Craig Edwin Haymaker.

## **There were no reports in 2015 from the families listed below.**

(We show these as a reminder to members of these families that their data is important in building our genealogy base.)

## **Jacob G. Heim (1874) and Regina Gross (1874)**

Joseph Gross Heim (1874) and Rosa Heim (1881)  
Sarah Elizabeth Heim (1874) and Emanuel Ulmer (1881)

Rebecca Heim (1874) and Jacob Samuel Heim (1882)

Sophia Heim (1874) and Martin D. Ulmer (1884)  
Margaret (Maggie) Emma Heim and Thomas Wuster (1880)

## **John Gross (1879) widower of Dorothy Wagner**

**John Sippley (1879) and Rosina Gross (1879)**

J. Henry Sippley (1879) and Rosabelle Bodle  
Mary "Mollie" Sippley (1879) and Reuben Harshbarger

Andrew Sippley (1879) and Hetty Snethen

## **Frederick Marquardt (1880) and Rosanna Kiess (1880)**

Martha Marquardt (1880) and Christian "Chris" Wuster

Ben Marquardt (1880) and Susan Pepperman  
Mary Jane Marquardt (1880) and Peter Clark

## **David Wagner (1880) and Christina Eckard (1880)**

William Franklin Wagner (1880) and Katherine Whitmire

George Leroy Wagner (1880) and Alverda Waggoner

Samuel Pearson Wagner (1880) and Nannie B. Lair

## **Johnnie Heim (1880) and Margaret Heim (1881)**

Rosa Heim (1881) and Joseph Gross Heim (1874)  
Christian F. Heim (1881) and Ada Barlow  
Malinda "Linda" M. Heim (1881) and Bert Judd  
Alma Heim (1881) and William "Will" G. James

## **John J. Heim (1882) and Rosina Heim (1882)**

Jacob Samuel Heim (1882) and Rebecca Heim (1874)

Anna Margaret Heim (1882) and Charles E. Stoltz (1886)

William C. Heim (1882) and Mary Ethel Barlow  
Lucy Rosina Heim (1882) and Walter E. Draper

## **John Andrew Kerr (1883) and Margaret Ann Eckard (1883)**

Minnie Kerr (1883) and Zadok "Zed" E. Kelly  
Emma B Kerr (1883) and Euel "Ellie" Neri Gentry  
Carrie Kerr (1883) and Vincent Hiskey

## **Ella Eckard (1883) and William V. Wood**

## **Jacob A. Ulmer (1884) and Mary Heim (1884)**

Solomon J. Ulmer (1884) and Mary Sharshal

## **Catharine Andrew (1884) widow of Abraham Eckard**

Eunice Jennie Eckard (1884) and Orrin Wilber Burr  
Melva Wynona Eckard (1884) and Leo "Lee" Daniel Hock

## **John W. Eckard (1885) and Celestia "Lesta" J. Kerr**

## **William F. Stoltz Sr. (1886) and Mary Ann Ulmer (1886)**



# Colony Cameo

## Evie Grubb bytes off daunting task

With the retirement of John Fiala, long-time keeper of Colony genealogical records, Evie Heim Grubb has stepped forward to take over this important function. While John has carried out his responsibilities from nearby Beatrice, Nebraska, employing the complicated wonders of the computer and modern e-mail, Evie will keep our vital statistics from her home in faraway Houston, Texas!

Evie is a daughter of the late Kenneth E. and Prudence (Cooper) Heim, and grew up in Michigan, California, and Nebraska. She graduated from Humboldt High School in 1978 and in 1981 received a BA in Journalism from the University of Nebraska, Lincoln, and in 1988 an MA in Business Administration from the University of St. Thomas, Houston. She and her husband, John K. Grubb, have been married for 25 years. He is a graduate of the University of Texas and has practiced trial law for 42 years. They have two sons, Will, who graduated from the University of Nebraska, Lincoln, and is now attending law school in Houston, and Charles, who is a junior at University of Nebraska, Lincoln.



Evie Heim Grubb

## Colony receives benches



**Jake Callaway gave Penn Colony two benches he made as part of his Eagle Scout award for community service. Jake, son of Scott and Cindy Williamson Callaway, is a senior at Lincoln East High School.**

## Pioneers' standards are kept

(continued from page 1)

community betterment. They help maintain a high standard in the school and never fail to extend neighborliness and moral support to the teaching faculty. Perhaps the best legacy brought from Pennsylvania and developed here in Nebraska is the respect in which the young people hold their elders. That too is a powerful force against juvenile delinquency.

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ANNUALLY THE COLONY holds a picnic, each year the roll call extended by several births and lessened by an occasional death. The affair has long since assumed the importance of a formal organization with duly elected officers. Nineteen hundred and fifty saw over 140 in attendance, with four generations represented. Many had come from long distances. While this organization aims at keeping alive the bonds of friendship and mutual interests formed so long ago, it in no wise segregates these good people from the rest of the community. Richardson county is their chosen land and its people their friends.

Dawson is proud of its Pennsylvania colony.

**Photo credits:** Page 1: Keith Heim (flowers); Marilyn Ogle (Sophia Ulmer). Page 2: Shirley Pierce. Page 3: Shirley and Neal Pierce. Page 5: Evie Heim Grubb; Robert W. Williamson (benches); Rebecca Richards-Kortum. Page 6: John Fiala.

## Work benefits mankind

A recent article in the Nebraska Magazine (University of Nebraska) featured the work of Dr. Rebecca Richards-Kortum. Her visit to the impoverished country of Malawi in south-east Africa, where inadequate medical care resulted in one of the highest infant death rates in the world, moved her to lead a project which would invent and supply low-cost medical technology to the developing world. As a result, the infant death rate in Malawi, for example, has decreased significantly.

Dr. Richards-Kortum, who is the chair of the Bioengineering Department at Rice University in Houston, is the great granddaughter of Tillie Heim Richards (S.F. Heim family). For a more complete biographical sketch, see *The Colony Penn*, July 2008.



Dr. Richards-Kortum

## Sadly Noted

**Dorothy Janette (Pitch) Belden**, 83, passed away at Harlem, Montana, November 13, 2014. She was born August 14, 1931. She was survived by her husband Harry, and daughters Cathy (Bob) Johnson, Bonni Belden, Ann (Jeff) Super, and Jannel Okeson, a sister Roberta (Bill) Belden, eight grandchildren and eight great-grandchildren. She was preceded in death by a son Curtis.

**Larry E. Brazau**, 69, Falls City, passed away June 23, 2015. He was born May 8, 1946 and married Susanne Constantine July 10, 1966. She is a great granddaughter of Mary Heim Stratton [John J. Heim family]. He is survived by his wife, sons William John and Ronald Eugene, and daughter, Catherine Susanne Weddle.

**Harry Belden**, 86, passed away at Harlem, Montana, March 15, 2015. He was born October 2, 1928. He was preceded in death by his wife Dorothy, and son Curtis. He is survived by his daughters Cathy, Ann, Bonni, and Jannel, his brother Bill Belden, and eight grandchildren and eight great-grandchildren. [Harry was a son of Clarke E. and Luella (Heim) Belden—Samuel F. Heim family].

**Marjorie Dale (Klima) Weber**, 89, passed away August 25, 2015 at Tulsa, Oklahoma. She was the daughter of Martha (Heim) Klima [Johnnie Heim family] and is survived by her husband of nearly 68 years, Robert, and a daughter, Jeanne of Santander, Spain. Inurnment in the Heim Cemetery was September 12, 2015.



## Volunteer Positions Open

Join the Penn Colony team! The following positions are still available, so if you have experience in these areas, or would like to learn, contact Dan Pleiss. We need you!

**Website Coordinator . . .** Are you even slightly internet-savvy? Take a look at [www.penncolonynebraska.com](http://www.penncolonynebraska.com).

Lots of people do look at our website, and we need help in keeping it interesting. You will work with the webmaster in supplying pictures and documents. You don't have to be an expert!

**Museum Director/Curator . . .** This is a very responsible position, and if you know about museums, how they function, their policies and procedures, or if you just enjoy visiting museums, you know how important this position is. You can be in on the beginning of this important work, and serve both Penn Colony and the Dawson community.

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## Oh, those relatives!

Do you sometimes find Penn Colony family relationships a bit confusing, producing an "Excedrin Headache"? If so, the photo [right] will only accentuate the problem.

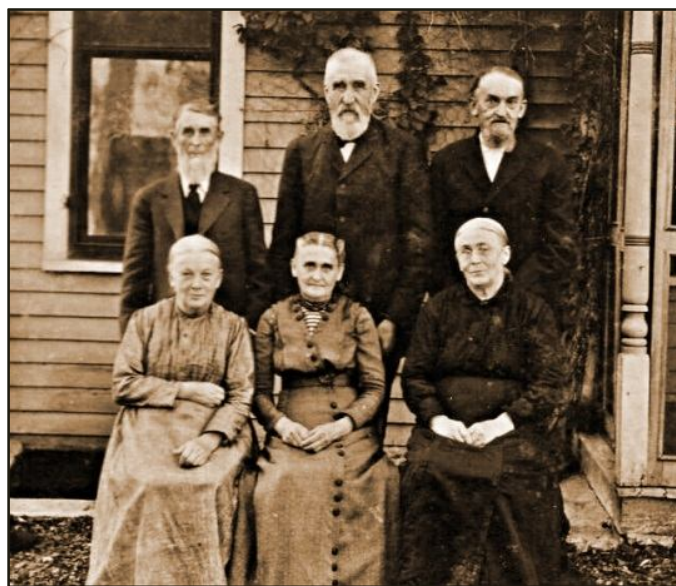
The couples shown from left to right are John J. Heim (standing behind his wife, Rosina); Christian D. Heim (in the middle) with his wife, Elizabeth Gross Heim, and Johnnie Heim and his wife Margaret.

John J., C.D., and Margaret were siblings, and Johnnie and Rosina were siblings. Moreover, John J., C.D., and Margaret are second cousins to Johnnie and Rosina. C.D.'s wife, Elizabeth, was a sister of Regina Gross Heim, whose husband, Jacob G. Heim, was a second cousin to everybody in the photo except Elizabeth! Ouch!  
—*kmh*

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Referring to the hardships, sacrifices, and struggles the Jacob G. Heim family faced when they moved to the untamed area of the Loyalsock Creek in the 1840s, Mary Heim Bilsing remarked, "Each hardship was a stepping stone to something better."  
—In *Westward Bound*,

Melvin Heim and Mary Heim Bilsing, 2010



## The enemy among us???

During World War I when America joined in the fight against Germany and Austria-Hungary, descendants of immigrants from Germany were often subject to persecution and even violence. Although several of their young men served in the Army and Navy, some of them in Europe, Penn Colonists were not exempt from hostility, vandalism, and violence.

This part of our history has largely been ignored and deserves study. If you are aware of any incidents of discrimination involving family members during that war (or WWII), please contact me so that we can do a feature about it. Please contact Keith M. Heim, 7200 Van Dorn, #359, Lincoln, NE 68506, [rvnkh4@gmail.com](mailto:rvnkh4@gmail.com), or 402-483-2290.