

I was the fifth youngest of a family of ten children. My home was in Bavaria, Germany and I was born on April the sixth, 1864. My father wished me to take up a profession of some kind by my brother who already was in America, wrote that it was no use to learn anything in Germany because in America everything was done different. So I had no rest and at the age of sixteen on April the twenty-third, 1880 I was destined to leave Germany for the U.S.A. and stepped on American soil on May the eighth of the same year. We had only one storm while on the ocean and I also had my share of sea sickness.

Having arrived at New York, I made haste to get to my brother who was then in Kansas. The city of Wichita was my next stop and I arrived there about the twelfth of May. The address of my brother's place was written on a slip of paper that I carried with me for I knew not a word of English. What a comical figure I must have cut getting off the train.

My next move was to enter a saloon and to show the address to the proprietor who upon looking at it shook his head meaning that he didn't understand. A crowd of boys, seeing I was a foreigner, motioned to me to follow them, which I did and brought me to another saloon with a colored bartender. He could not read the address but knew another in the adjoining room that could.

I was quite restless by this time but never-the-less had to be subject to my guides. Having found a man that could talk German, the boys left me, and my escort went in search of a way to get me to Douglas which was thirty miles distant and the place where my brother lived. The town could not be reached by train so my escort tried to get the brewery man who hauled beer to Douglas and was our neighbor

but I didn't know that at the time. I found I had been a little late and the brewery man had already left for Douglas. Nothing else was to be done but to stay in Wichita. I stayed over night and my guide told me he would hire a horse and buggy that would take me to Douglas first thing in the morning.

The boarding house where I stayed that night looked well enough to me and so did the bed, but I hardly slept a wink. I was terribly annoyed and restless and the next morning to my surprise I saw it had been the bedbugs that kept me company. I had an absolute horror of bedbugs and much rather would have slept in a stable. The escort of the previous night was as good as his word, and I found my horse and buggy all ready after I had breakfast. By noon we were in Douglas and had dinner together at a hotel after which we went in search of my brother who lived about a half mile from the hotel.

My brother, ^{Joseph Otto} who was nine years my senior, and his partner had rented one hundred and sixty acres of land and I worked for them for five dollars a month. I had worked there only a couple of months and my brother and I left for Indianapolis on October the First in a covered wagon. Our covered wagon was drawn by two horses.

One afternoon toward three or four o'clock we were going along when we met two or three other covered wagons. We were leaving Kansas while they were entering. We stopped, thinking we perhaps found someone who could speak German. My brother having been here longer in the United States could speak to them. I noticed the lady in the first covered wagon cry after hearing that we were Germans. Upon asking my brother why she cried he told me that the lady said, "If a German can't make a living there's no use for an Englishman to even try." Times looked bleak and dark to the foreigner who came to America with the idea that the country was rich.

The road led up a long steep hill and our horses were hungry and exhausted but we were bound to find food and water for them soon so we kept on. The hill was about seventy feet steep and on the other side of the road (evidently down and alongside) you could see for about half a mile. It was like a high ridge and I judge from ten to fifteen miles long. In one place it was so steep that we had to help push the wagon. When night fell and the farmhouse lights twinkled on either side of us we decided to camp for the night, but had no water nor food. It was all a prairieland.

We tied our weary animals to the back of the wagon and left them eat the grass by the roadside and when that was gone we would push the wagon a little further for a fresh spot of grass. The next morning we had to go a long way before we could water our horses and the descent was even worse than going up. Just on this side of Fort Scott we noticed small bushes growing, getting bigger as we drew closer to the town - the first bushes we had seen from Douglas to Fort Scott. It had been all prairie.

We camped over night in town, being the only town we ever camped in. I don't remember every detail of the trip and next I remember the ferry boat ride across the Mississippi which was about a half mile by the town of Hanibal. From there we went through several small towns and through Jacksonville, Springfield, Decatur, and then to Indianapolis. It took us one month to make those seven hundred miles.

We then worked for a man named Mr. George Stout. A vacant log house was nearby and that was our home for that winter. We made wood and earned fifty cents a cord. Batching was quite an art of us, for we had to scrimp and save to make ends meet. Corn mush or middling pancakes and middling sauce was made to be used as syrup for the

pancakes. That was a very hard and cold winter and we worked even though it was thirty-two below zero. Several men froze on haywagons hauling hay to town. I forgot to mention that Mr. Stout butchered several pigs and gave us the head of one and we thought we were kings at a feast. That was the only meat we had that winter. A small piece was only allowed at the main meal at noon.

In spring we moved to a fifteen acre land that my brother rented from Mr. Stout. He paid about one hundred and twenty-five dollars a year rent. I received eight dollars a month from him and the lad was used for truck farming.

In about a year I went to St. Louis to apply for work. I worked for a Frenchman in a broom cornfield. In about a week my work was again at an end. So I traveled again and got a place in Illinois. I do not remember the town, and worked for three or four weeks.

Then I traveled again - I went to Hamilton, Ohio. I walked down to the canal and asked for work on the canal boat because I was short on cash. They gave me the job to unload coal. When finished with this, I went for my vest and coat which was in the kitchen of the boat and to my surprise I found my belongings gone. I was very disappointed. Not only coat and vest were gone but some little valuable souvenirs I brought along with me from Germany, such as a gold watch, rosary, and etc., which I had in my pockets, were also gone. (I sent for money from my brother so I could buy myself clothing I needed.)

Then I went to the country and applied for a job by an Irishman named Walsh. I helped him put fillings in the road. I worked for him for a short time and then went back to my brother in Indiana. I worked for him almost a year. I did truck gardening till in the fall. Then I got a job in town as coachman. I had this job till spring.

Then I rented ten acres of land to try to make more money but I failed and lost everything I had. I stayed with my brother a year, then I got a job near La Fayette. I worked there for a farmer till Christmas. There I earned sixty-nine cents a day and nothing on rainy days and two meals on Sundays and on days I didn't work.

Then I went back to my brother and stayed there during the winter. In spring I got a job in Indianapolis. I worked there at the Marble Iron Foundry for about two years.

Then I quit and went to Chicago; I worked there in the Marble when suddenly I became ill and had to quit. When I recovered I got a job in the McCormick Harvest Machine Company. I worked there till September 1888, then I came back to Indianapolis and got my old job back in the Marble. I owned a lot on which I built a house. A few years later I bought another lot; I also built a house on that lot, too. I rented out both houses. Then I got married on October the fifth, 1891 in St. Anthony's Church, Indianapolis, Indiana.

I worked in the Marble about three years. Then I quit and worked in the Indiana Foundry; I was there a year and a half - then I got rheumatism in my feet and had to quit. Then I bought an eighty acre farm about three and a half miles from where I lived. We had two children when we moved on the farm in the spring. I sold one house so as to help pay for the farm. We moved in a log house and lived in it seven years. Two of our children were born in this house. We lived on a hill and below this hill there was a spring. The hill was about thirty-five feet steep; we had to carry all the water we used in the house up this hill. The cows drank water from a creek that ran kitty-corner right through my eighty acres.

The house was about seventy-five feet above the creek. Beneath the hill there was a pretty grove and people from the cities would come to stay there for several days and

longer; they also had their picnics there. I built a road down the hill on which I spent many a toilsome and weary hour so the people could get to the grove better and too so I could get to the biggest part of my land better. I had to detour about one mile because of the creek before I built this road.

In seven years I built a frame house a little farther west of the log house. We lived in this house six years. Three children were born in this house. Then I sold the place because it was too far to send our children to Catholic school and had it too far from church, also.

We moved near Medford, Wisconsin on October the tenth, 1907. I bought forty acres and we stayed on this place five years. One child was born here. Seven weeks after the child was born my wife became sick and had to be taken to the hospital at Chippewa Falls. She was operated for appendicitis; she stayed at the hospital ten weeks. Our two oldest daughters took care of the baby and the household; the oldest being sixteen years old.

There was not enough income on this farm to support my family so I sold it and moved to Wuerzburg. There I bought an eighty-acre farm. At first there was no rectory here, only a church, so we had services twice a month. One child was born on this farm. There also was a saloon on this place. I had the saloon because of this for five years and five months. Then I closed it because I could make no progress on the farm, and I didn't get enough income from the saloon; so it didn't pay to neglect the farm, and there are several other reasons why I closed.

The farmers used to come and put their horses in my barn during Sunday Mass. They spoke of making a stable but no one volunteered to take care of it; and then the automobile came in existence and nothing became of it.



