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ENGELHARD, MRS. THERESIA

File No. B-338

Mrs. Theresia Engelhard was born in Kirchheim Kurhessen, Germany, on October 15, 1841, the daughter of Conrad and Elizabeth (Koch) Wieber.

Theresia (Wieber) Engelhard had seven brothers and sisters: John, William, Henry, Joseph, Elizabeth, Marian, Catherine and Theresia.

In the year of 1843, Conrad Wieber and family came to America sailing on a sailboat which took several weeks to cross the ocean. They emigrated to Westphalia Clinton County, Michigan. Theresia at this time was two years old.

Theresia spent her childhood days and also experienced the hardships of the early settlers in Westphalian, Michigan. Later in the year of 1858 Theresia was advised to change climate because of ill health. Theresia joined her brother John who then was living in Jacobs Prairie, Stearns county. She made the trip up the Ohio River to St. Paul by boat and from there came by railroad to St. Cloud, traveling by ox team to Jacobs Prairie.

Here she met Jacob Engelhard. In the year 1860 she married Jacob Engelhard. Jacob Engelhard was the son of Valentine and Catherine (Bush) Engelhard.

Valentine and Catherine (Bush) Engelhard were natives of Germany, coming to America in 1846.

Jacob's father was a shoe maker by trade. Coming to Minnesota they started by making the trip down the Ohio River and up the Mississippi River by boat to St. Anthony Falls. At the point they purchased a team of oxen and came to Richmond by wagon, arriving April 28, 1859. They located on a claim of 160 acres west of Richmond and built the second frame house in this vicinity. During the Indian uprising they remained on the farm and although

very much afraid, each night collected all their axes pitchforks and guns so they were prepared for a sudden attack.

In this environment Jacob spent his young manhood, until the year 1860.

In July 1860 he married Theresia Wieber. The ceremony took place in Richmond, in the frame church building which was newly erected at this time. They knelt on joist as they were just starting to lay the floor boards at this time. The pastor officiating was Rev. Bruno.

Jacob and Theresia Engelhard made their home with Jacob's folks and when the Civil War brokeout Jacob was drafted to go to war. Not wishing to leave his wife and family purchased his way out with \$300.00. Before the war was over he was drafted the second time and paid \$200.00 more to stay out of the army.

About this period the Sioux Indian's rebellion started and Jacob had to leave for service. Theresia Engelhard carried on the responsibilities of operating the farm and bearing for Jacobs folks.

The tales Theresia Engelhard told in later years gave a vivid impression of all the hardships she had to endure.

The Indians were very hostile at this time as the white people stole the land from them. One hundred and sixty acres could be bought for \$100. or even less if they had silver money. The Indians came to the house to beg for bread and salt. At times so many came that Theresia hid the bread. The Indians could smell if any one was baking and there wouldn't be enough left for the family table. The Indians would sit along the fences and wait for bread.

Each night before locking the buildings Theresia would collect all the axes and pitchforks, and put them in a corner handy so she were able to defend herself. There was no one able to fire the gun as Jacobs father had never learned to shoot. Jacob would be out with the service men scouting and helping where ever he was needed. They had a large dog and every time he growled or barked, Theresia and all in the house would get up and watch so they wouldn't be caught unaware by the Indians.

During this up rising every few days some regiment of soldiers or scouts would go by. Some stopped in for water and would tell Theresia the news. One day one of the soldiers that came up for water and an onion, told Theresia not to be afraid of them but to lock the door as several drunken soldiers were following. She did as she was told, but when they came they caused so much disturbances chasing geese that she had to go out and order them away. They left as she had given them quite a harsh command.

Theresia has many more of these stories to tell. She relates the story of George Brisse's father, (a brother-in-law- to Theresia) who was scalped by the Indians.

After the uprising was over Jacob and Theresia located on 160 acres farm near his fathers home. He erected a log cabin which was 18 feet by 28 feet and started farming with a team of oxen and two cows.

To Jacobs and Theresia Engelhard eleven children were born: Valentine, born October 3rd, 1862, Elizabeth, born September 10th, 1864, Catherine, born September 20, 1866, William, Born October 17, 1868, George October 5, 1871, Joseph, August 24, 1875; Mary, October 18, 1877; Rose, March 24, 1882.

Three children died in infancy, Eva born 1870, John born in 1877, and Blazius born in 1879.

Elizabeth now Mrs. Tom Wenner remembers when she was nine years old, of how her father would cut grain with the first binder, while she and her mother Theresia would tie the grain by hand. At night by moonlight they would carry it to gether and their father would stack it.

Jacob always used a cradle to cut around the field first so not a spear of grain would go to waste.

Theresia many times talked about the year 1876 when the grasshoppers came like a cloud of heavy dust. They came almost 2 weeks before the grain was ripe so they didn't do much harm the first year. That fall they laid their eggs and in the second year 1877 the eggs hatched and the ground was covered with young grasshoppers. As soon as they could fly they destroyed every thing as they went, the grain was nice and green in June but a few weeks later there was nothing left. The grasshoppers would chew up the handles of the hay forks and would also chew on clothing like jackets or overalls. The farmers tried everything to destroy them, but the more they tried the worse they got. After every green stem was gone even the grass, the old ones loaded the young ones on their backs and flew off just like they had come.

Theresia recalled when her husband Jacob would go to St. Paul with his team of oxen to get flour. He would buy two or three sacks of flour at a time if there was sufficient money. He would be gone two weeks or more depending on the weather. Theresia would be home with the small children and doing the farm work. Later on they went as far as Cold Spring for flour.

The family sewing was all done by hand, and the first lights were home made candles.

Jacob Engelhard later purchased 120 acres to add to his farm and built new buildings with more modern equipment. After thirty-five years of farming Theresia and Jacob retired moving to the village of Richmond.

Jacob Engelhard held many public offices and served on the school board for several years.

At the age of seventy-seven years, in the year of 1914 Jacob died was was buried in the St. Peter and Paul cemetery at Richmond.

There were six children that preceeded him in death. Valentine in 1910, Joseph in 1912, George in 1913, and three in infancy/

Five children survive; Mrs. Elizabeth Wenner, Richmond, Mrs. Mary Hennen, St. Cloud, Mrs. Catherine Wenner, Vancouver, Washington, Rose Engelhard of Fingel, North Dakota and Wm. Engelhard of Minneapolis.

Theresia the wife of Jacob lived to be ninety-two and one half years old. She had very little schooling in her youth as her father did not believe in having the children waste much time in writing or studying so she never was taught to write. She could not write to her folks after coming to Minnesota, and when her father died Theresia's mother sent a letter to tell her and also send the inheritance she was to have from home. This all happened on her wedding day.

This money was later used to pay duty to keep Jacob from going to war.

After all the hard and laborious years she and Jack had spent on their farm, Theresia many times told these stories to the small grandchildren who would sit at her side and listen, many of the smaller ones falling asleep as she kept on talking.

Theresia loved to sew and was know as a quilt maker as he loved to patch and piece quilts. Many of these were donated to bazars and each grandchildren received one as a gift and remembrance.

Theresia was very active at the age of 92 years and 6 months. She died on Friday evening May 4, 1934, she was buried in the St. Peter and Paul Catholic cemetery.

There were forty-one grandchildren and 55 great grandchildren.

Interviewed: Mrs. Thomas Wenner
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By: Alexander Pallansch

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