

Breyfogle Sentinel Dispatch

March 2005

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From the Editor

To the best of my knowledge this is the first newsletter to be published about the Breyfogle Family history since the late 1950's. When Lewis Breyfogle began publishing his work. As we all are aware, Lewis worked on his history research the old fashioned way.

That is, he wrote letters and made personal trips to gather data. He typed his work on a regular typewriter and it appears as though the copies were mimeographed, a technology that has long since gone away.

Now in the 21st century we use the Internet as a research tool, send e-mail, and publish web sites. We use the personal computer (PC) to record our work on huge database programs that can sort, slice, and dice the information in a myriad of ways.

But in the end, Family History Research is all about the people and somehow the PC, Internet, and e-mail seem so impersonal. So we thought that perhaps there are those out there that would appreciate receiving a newsletter from time to time to discuss the history surrounding our surname.

Our plans for publication are not hard and fast at this point. We don't think that we can commit to a monthly newsletter or even a quarterly paper. So at this time we will make this offer to those reading this document.

If you find interest in this format, and would like to see more of them; jot us a note or send us e-mail (dan@breyfogle.com). Tell us what you think about the format, what news you'd like to see, and how often you'd like to see it.

We think a newsletter of this sort could include articles with the following information:

- Excerpts from Lewis Breyfogle's work
- Current research on the Breyfogle or other related surnames
- Birth announcements
- Death announcements and obituary reprints (sorry, this is part of life)
- Family stories
- Family photographs, old and new

www.breyfogle.com Report

The long awaited update to the website arrived in March. This update included as much of the information gathered from the August 2004 Convergence as well as the data collected since the last update as we could get entered. We would like to thank all those who contributed information for publication and will continue with entry, as time is available.

This update doubled the amount of data displayed on-line. For those of you that are into statistics here is a run-down of the information currently on-line:

- 966 – Surnames
- 3,494 – Individuals
- 1,098 – Marriages
- 13 – Generations

What is missing from this on-line record is the stories that make these names come alive. It is one thing to record a chronological listing of names, dates, and places of our family members; yet the family members represented each had a story, or so we think.

We will again ask those who have family stories to forward them to us for publication in this newsletter as well as on-line. We do not charge for this and feel that publishing the stories of our family's lives provides color to an otherwise drab outline of details.

A Word From Hans Peter Brevogel



Photo courtesy Nick Casida

At the August 2004 Breyfogle convergence Hans Peter, a very distant relative of the Breyfogle's in America, gave us a copy of his

writing concerning the Breyfogle's in Gundersheim. We have "Americanized" his writing in the transcription below. If you would like a copy of the original please let us know and we will mail a photocopy of it to you.

The Breyvogels history in Gundersheim starts about 1619, one year after the start of the 30 Years War. There is an old document in the archive of Speyer showing Valentin Breivogel Schultheis (Town Mayor) and 10 other people that went to the courthouse.

In 1630 the Swedish King Gustav Adolph crossed the Rhine River from the east with a large army at Oppenheim and destroyed the west bank area. The 30 Years War was a religious war with terrible consequences. It is reported that 70% of the population of Germany died, most by starvation or illness. Soldiers of the opposing armies stole the food and animals before burning the towns.

During this war the ruler of Kurpfalz (Palatine) converted to the protestant religion and demanded that all his subjects do the same. During this time the ruler's subjects were the property of the ruler and were forced to submit to his demands. The ruler of Kurpfalz Palatine (Electoral Palatinate) at this time was the Prince Elector in Heidelberg.

At some point during this time period many of the citizens of this area wanted to show their religion by the spelling of their names. It is unclear exactly when this practice started. For example:

Catholic	Protestant
Breivogel	Breyvogel
Janson	Jansohn
Diel	Diehl
Meier	Maier

There is a recorded document in Gundersheim that indicates in 1630 the town had to pay 300 Gulden for a war tax, and one of the names on this document was Hans Breivogel.

The Westfalien peace contract (Peace of Westphalia) was signed in 1648 ending this war. There is a document recorded in 1650 showing that Hans and Valentin Breivogel and their children were citizens of Gundersheim.

The ruler of Palatine died in 1689 without leaving a male heir. The oldest daughter was married to the brother of the French King. The king wanted the west bank as part of his territory so sent General Melac to the west bank and

destroyed all the buildings and records and forced the people to move to the east bank of the Rhine River. This left no one to record the history of the Breivogels' or where they went from here.

We found this piece very interesting so did a few Internet searches and found a great deal of information about the 30-Years War and in particular on Palatine. Hans mentioned the Swedish King Gustav Adolph (Gustavus Adolphus) and in our research we found that this was a rather colorful character that led his armies into battle himself.

In fact he was "killed in the renowned Battle of Lützen where he was misled by dense fog and poor eyesight to charge into an enemy formation."¹ Our source goes on to say that Gustav was nicknamed "The Lion of the North - Savior of Protestants" and that following his death his wife "Maria Eleonora of Brandenburg initially kept his body, and later his heart, in her castle for over one year. He now rests (including heart) in Riddarholmskyrkan in Stockholm."¹

Most of the sources we reviewed looked at the 30-Years War as having 4 distinct periods:

- Bohemian Revolt
- Danish intervention
- Swedish intervention
- French intervention

The amount of detail on this subject is far too broad for this newsletter, but it is interesting to note the consequences of the 30-Years War on the people in Germany and especially the Palatine area. "Estimates of mass civilian casualties of up to thirty percent of the population of Germany are now treated with caution. It is almost certain that the war caused serious dislocation to the economy of central Europe, but may have done no more than seriously exacerbate changes in the terms of trade caused by other factors."¹ We found other sources that mention deaths of 50% and still another agrees with Hans that it was nearly 70%.

One of the most fascinating web pages we found was titled, "The Poor Palatines"², which is a rather lengthy piece written by Gene Garmen. In this piece he chronicles the events throughout the 30-Years War and the eventual migration of German's out of the Palatine area. In his writing he relates that most of the Palatines that moved to England claimed religious persecution as the reason, but most historians, according to

Garmen, think the real reason was starvation and political upheaval.

Our final search took us to a site dedicated to family history research and we will quote directly from their site. "The fertile and rich lands of the Electoral Palatinate were destroyed by order of King Louis XIV (the "Sun King") of France ("Burn the Palatinate!"), under General Melac in 1689, in the War of the Palatine Succession whereby France claimed the Palatinate. In 1705 Protestants and Catholics both nominally received equal rights, the Catholics receiving 5/7 of the churches, the Protestants 2/7. A knowledge of history and changes in religion are essential when seeking ancestors in this area."³

We would like to thank Hans for his work in getting us started on this subject. We found more information on the topic than we could reproduce here and encourage all you history buffs to dig deeper into this history. Undoubtedly you will find, as we did, plenty of motivation for our ancestor, Johann Petar Breyvogel, to immigrate to this country.

End Notes:

1. On-line Encyclopedia – Wikipedia (<http://en.wikipedia.org>)
2. The Poor Palatines by Gene Garmen (<http://www.sunnetworks.net/~ggarmen/palatine.html>)
3. What Is a Palatine? - Historical Background by Ernest Thode for Antique Week (<http://freepages.family.rootsweb.com/~adelr/aug88/aug88p3.htm>)

2004 Convergence Report

The 2004 Breyfogle Convergence, the 7th gathering of Breyfogle's, was held in Berea, Kentucky with the Richard and Roberta Breyfogle family as our hosts. The event began on Friday evening and continued through Sunday. Saturday was the big day for exchanging family history material and catching up on each other's lives since the previous convergence.

We had a great meal put together by a local caterer with plenty of food for all. After lunch Hans Peter Breyvogel treated us to some wine from his Co-op in Germany, what a treat!



Photo Courtesy, Nick Casida

The group discussed the timing and location of the next Convergence and it was decided that we should try a 2-year interval instead of 3 years. The next convergence will be in Mason City, IA, 2006. Nick Casida, or should we say his wife Pam, volunteered to host the 2008 Convergence, location to be announced later.

Convergence History

While on the subject of the Convergence we gathered a list of prior events from Nick Casida. Here is his list:

1. July 4, 1984 – Decatur, IL
2. July 4 – 6, 1986 – Kent WA
3. July 4, 19?? – Overland Park, KA
4. Aug 24, 1994 Gundersheim, Germany
5. 1997 – Denver, CO
6. Aug 4, 2001 – Hot Springs, SD
7. Aug 7, 2004 – Berea, KY

If anyone has further information on any of the past meetings we'd be happy to report on it in the next newsletter.

Convergence 2006

The 2006 Breyfogle Convergence will be held in Mason City, Iowa. Mason City, located on US Interstate 35 about 30 miles south of the Minnesota border, is a community of 30,000 people. Our bordering community of Clear Lake, IA offers water sports and many antique and gift shops.

Mason City is best known for its two cement plants, both Lehigh Portland Cement and Holcim (formerly Northwestern Portland Cement) have large quarries near town and turn the native limestone to the dry cement products sold all over the US. During the week the blasting can be heard around town and the smokestacks are visible for miles.

We are also known as the birthplace of Meredith Willson who wrote The Music Man. His boyhood home is restored and open to the public along with the new Music Man Square. We are hoping to reserve space in this facility for our gathering that was designed for just this sort of thing.



Mason City is also known for its many Prairie School Style Architecture homes, the Stockman House and the Park Inn Hotel were both designed by Frank Lloyd Wright, and the entire Rock Glen neighborhood features this style of architecture.



Stockman House by Frank Lloyd Wright

We also have the MacNider Art Museum that offers visitors many interesting and changing collections of art.

It is our hope that we can plan an event that will enable the extended Breyfogle family to enjoy some of our local attractions as well as the traditional gathering. We have not set a date and are open to suggestions.

We will use some of the newsletter space in future editions to give more details about the area and the plans as they become available.

Lewis W. Breyfogle's History

As many of you are aware, Lewis W. Breyfogle did a great deal of work gathering family history during the 1950's. His work was called, "What I know about the Breyfogle Family, the First Five Generations." Current research has extended this knowledge base to 13 generations, but his work and that of Flora Grumman seem to be the basis to every current research project.

We received a scan of a photograph titled, Israel Breyfogle. This prompted us to refer back to Lewis' work to better define this picture.



Scan courtesy Nick Casida

We are not sure if this is Israel Breyfogle, Senior or Junior. But based on the very faded image that we bumped up a bit with a paint shop program, we are assuming it is Israel Breyfogle, Sr. Lewis Breyfogle mentions his great grandfather Israel as follows:

"The Breyfogles [Sic] came to Kansas from Delaware, Ohio in 1866. The whole family came: Israel, Sr., and his wife; Israel, Jr. and his wife, and Mora (born 1844) and her husband, John Coe, a Civil War veteran. The bought land and lived for a while in what is now downtown Kansas City, Missouri, and later they purchased rich Shawnee Indian farmland within what is now the fast-growing suburban Johnson County, Kansas City of Overland Park. There, for about 40 years, until shortly after the turn of the century, the three children of Israel lived on their separate farms and raised their families."

SOURCE: What I know about the Breyfogle Family, Lewis W. Breyfogle, 1963, Page 43

Just In!

As this newsletter goes to press we just received a full transcription of the Lewis Breyfogle, Flora Grumman, and JD Breyfogle diaries from Steve Breyfogle. Steve included an addendum detailing the descendents of George Jefferson Breyfogle, along with a full picture section. It is a phenomenal spiral bound work and perhaps we can talk him into producing the work for sale at the next Convergence.

Contact Information

You may contact us by regular mail at:

Dan and Sandy Breyfogle
20688 Spruce Avenue
Mason City, IA 50401

(641) 424-6089
(641) 423-9563 – Fax Line

Our website is www.breyfogle.com and you may contact us by e-mail at dan@breyfogle.com

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Help Wanted

Staff writers needed for the Breyfogle Sentinel Dispatch. No experience needed. Must be willing to work short hours and no pay. Resumes not needed, no application blanks, no interviews needed.

We are an equal opportunity employer

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