



Heritage Happenings

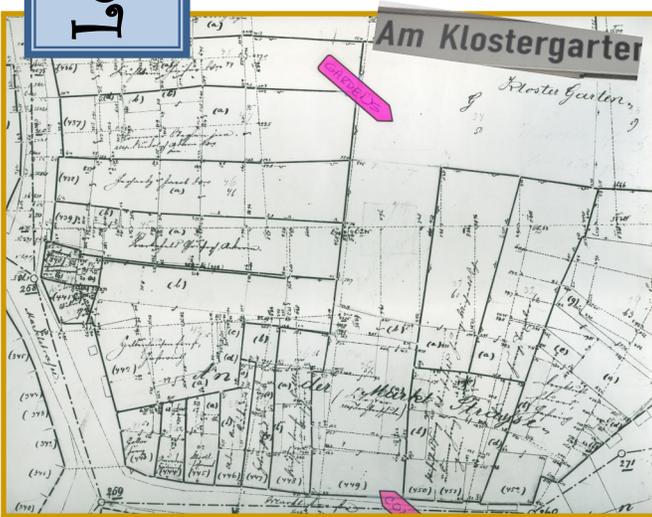
Archives Office

November 2022

Lest We Forget...



It was now time for the rest of the Gieboldehausen Sisters to leave for America. Their Sisters who had now been in America for almost a year were adjusting to their new life with the American Sisters. The second floor of the convent (present Libraries location) had been relegated to them as their living quarters. Mother Augustine was still their Mother Superior. Their prayers, rules, customs, and meals continued as they had been doing in Germany except for their time in chapel. Now they gathered as one group. (Past history noted that the North Parlor was the American Sisters first chapel and that St. Thomas was the chapel for the German Sisters. Given that not all of them could fit into the North Parlor, it could be assumed that St. Thomas was the main Chapel once all the German Sisters arrived.)



Back in Germany, the year of waiting to leave must have been a difficult time. Sister Salesia Dubenrop was now their acting Superior. To her fell the responsibility of selling what they could not bring along and settling business yet remaining. In the end, they brought \$16,000 with them. The large trunks that Mother Augustine had left behind were soon filled to the brim. While they waited, they cooked, did needlework, even collected seeds for fruits and vegetables that could be planted in their new gardens. Sisters took time to visit their gardens: *“Step out the back door and walk through a paved yard. Open the gate and enter the flower garden. Out of this garden, step into the orchard and out of this into a large vegetable garden. The gardener prepared the group and the Sisters furnished the work. Each one’s portion was divided by side paths. Orchard and garden had long paths where Sisters took their walks.”* Bringing seeds for the sowing would be seen as new life as they would be seen poking heads up...in a new land...a connection to home. Every mission they left had boasted gardens they had created.

Before leaving more sadness faced them as another death would reduce them to just ten who would make the journey. On December 3, 1875 Sister Agnes, blood sister of Sister Pancratia, was taken home to heaven. She was only 22 years old, professed less than a year, and eagerly awaiting the time she would travel with her sister to America. Now 14 of their Sisters would be left behind including their two

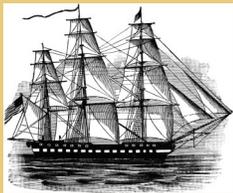
foundresses, praying for them from heaven. Just before leaving they probably visited each of their graves, praying for courage and strength to face this new transition in their lives.



Last... a visit to the pilgrimage center “Maria in der Wiese—Mary of the Meadows”, in Rollshausen. Overseen by the Augustinians since 1864, good byes and special thanks to the priest who had helped them find a place in America could not be neglected. Here is her image in their Chapel of Mercy. Finally all was ready.

It was time to leave.

In July of 1876 Sister Salesia led her group of 10 Sisters to Rotterdam much as the first group had done. Here is the boat passenger list identifying each of the ten along with their age. In comparison it is noted that the youngest members went with the first group while the older members stayed behind to finish things up. The average age of the first group was 28 years while the average age of the second group was 34. They sailed on the Ship SS. P. Calahan and, after a two, possibly three week journey, they arrived in New York on August 8, 1876.



Passenger lists

Passenger List	
SHIP: S.S. Calahan	
Arrived August 8, 1876	
1. Antonia Brunns	age 33
2. Boniface Kohlrautz	age 29
3. Pancratia Rokar	age 29
4. Dominica Eckhart	age 34
5. Salesia Dubenkropp	age 33
6. Mechtildis Feindt	age 29
7. Alfonsa Sommer	age 29
8. (Melania) Deister (Ottilia)	age 33
9. Josepha Drieselman	age 34
10. Clara Hunold	age 34



Left to Right: Sr. Anthony Brunns, Sr. Boniface Kohlrautz, Sr. Pancratia Rokar, and Sr. Alfonsa Sommer

Arrival at the Convent: August vs. September? Before or after the election and decision to amalgamate???



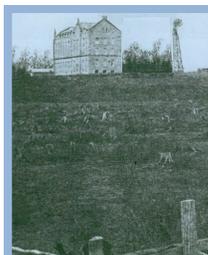
If the first group left Germany September 18, reached New York October 4 and then the convent October 8, why did the second group, leaving in July not reach the convent until mid-September? **Sleuthing**, as usual, was the answer!! Clicking thru the internet led back across the ocean to Rotterdam Archives—passenger lists. A message could be left...and the two passenger lists I had were added to the message. Imagine the excitement the next morning when the following email message was received:

The proper name of the ship is the SS P. Caland; it made multiple trans-Atlantic voyages in the 1870's, and they appeared to last about 2 weeks. The voyage you are interested in arrived in NY on the 7th (some records say the 8th). The lengths of voyages depended very much on the weather, i.e. if there were storms or other reasons that caused them to be off course. The ship also stopped at other ports along the way which could delay a journey. So the best estimate I can give you for a departure date would be around the 24th of July. The passenger list confirmed arrival in New York. Then she attached this newspaper article!!!

Translation: 12 compassionate sisters (nuns), who, by the Prussian laws against religious orders had to leave their homeland Westphalia, arrived on 7th August with the SS P. Caland of the Rotterdam Line, in New York. On the 8th they continued their trip to their new home, Minotowoc in Wisconsin.

— Aus dem Vaterlande vertrieben.
Zwölf barmherzige Schwestern, welche durch die preussischen Gesetze gegen religiöse Orden gezwungen worden waren, ihr Vaterland Westphalen zu verlassen, langten am 7. August mit dem Dampfer „P. Caland“ von der Rotterdamer Linie in New York an und setzten am 8 ihre Reise nach ihrer neuen Heimath Manitowoc in Wisconsin fort.

Further confirmation was found in Sister Gonzaga Leineweber's history. She wrote: the second group arrived mid-August. This means that they were here for the election of Mother Augustine and the process that they went thru in voting for or against amalgamation. Searching Mother Odelia's German annals revealed a blank space for month and date of arrival but in a typed copy September 18 had been inserted. More in the next issue!!



Finally arriving at and seeing the site of their new home must have been overwhelming! Their arrival was such a cause for joyful celebration. They could hardly wait to greet one another!