

Johann Wolfgang Braeutigam

Born: March 17, 1829 ----- Died: September 3, 1884

And Wife

Christine Charlotte Kensing

Born: November 26, 1831 ----- Died: November 18, 1924

Were Married: September 1, 1850

Children:

August ----- November 25, 1851 to August 13, 1916

Heinrich ----- January 25, 1854 to

Emma ----- January 17, 1856 to April 23, 1858

Anna ----- December 9, 1857 to February 27, 1929

Richard ----- December 3, 1859 to March 27, 1927

Emma ----- January 18, 1862 to February 4, 1932

Otto ----- August 8, 1864 to February 6, 1944

Max ----- January 10, 1866 to August 5, 1884

Emil ----- February 11, 1868 to August 20, 1959

Christine ----- May 23, 1871 to July 4, 1959

Henry ----- March 9, 1874 to October 26, 1946

Mr. and Mrs. Johann Wolfgang Braeutigam

In the early part of 1800 at Kaltenlengsfeld in eastern Germany, there lived a family of stalwart God fearing Germans named Braeutigam. These sturdy but active people loved horses, good music and the better things of life. It was the love of freedom and "wanderlust" that encouraged them to pioneer into this land called Texas.

John Wolfgang Braeutigam, who was born on March 17, 1829 at Kaltenlengsfeld, Germany, was a member of these Braeutigams. He came to Texas with his father Valentin, who was born January 26, 1791 and was married to Marie Elisabeth Pfeifer on January 31, 1815. Marie Elisabeth was born December 16, 1795 in Kaltenlengsfeld.

After the father's death, presumably near Indianola, before they started to their destination in the Fisher-Miller Grant; the Mother Marie Elisabeth Braeutigam, the son Johann Wolfgang, a daughter Anna Elise (Mrs. August Schoenewolf) later Mrs. Valentin Hopf, and another daughter Eva Elise (Mrs. Casper Marschall) had to take the initiative in carrying out the plan for a new life in America.

When Valentin made application of immigration, date October 8, 1845, 62 persons were listed in his group including Casper Marschall's. In Volume 22 of Prince Solms Archives was listed V. Braeutigam and seven persons; namely: J. W. Braeutigam, Marie Elizabeth (his wife) Anna Elise (Mrs. August Schoenewolf) and her children: August, Sofia, and Christianna.

The Braeutigams left Bremen on the ship John Dethardt in the early fall. In the biography of Pastor B. Dangers, in "Pioneer of God's Hills", we find written in the opening paragraph the following: "It was October 10, 1845, the tenth vessel taking German emigrants to Texas -- the Johann Dethardt -- was ready to embark from Bremen." This same ship brought the family of Valentin Braeutigam. The Dangers landed shortly before Christmas at Galveston and conducted Christmas services in the open. If this is authentic for the Pastor's family and the Johann Dethardt Ship List is correct which states that they landed at Galveston on January 12, 1846, there is confusing data. Perhaps D. H. Klaerner Emigration Society Agent was absent when they arrived and recorded them later.

After arriving at Galveston, they were transported for a hundred miles with all their baggage, in smaller boats to the Verein port of Garlshaven now Indianola on Port Lavaca in Matagorda Bay. Matagorda was not deep enough for the larger ships.

From Indianola they were destined for the Fischer-Miller grant. Arrangements were made with a teaming concern from Houston to transport the immigrants by wagons and carts to New Braunsfels where land had been bought by Prince Solms Braunfels Commissioner General of the Adelsverein. War broke out between the states and Mexico and the teamsters could not keep their commitments.

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So the colonists sojourned for two months at Indianola where unusual amounts of rain and unsanitary conditions brought on an epidemic of fever from which many immigrants lost their lives and Valentin Braeutigam was one of the victims.

In March the immigrants set out on a miserable march through an unknown country to New Braunfels and thence to Fredericksburg. They followed the Guadalupe River closely through the counties of Calhoun, Victoria, Dewitt, Gonzales, Comal and Gillespie as far as the Llano River Basin, a part of the Fisher - Miller Grant.

The Adelsverein had become bankrupt by 1847 due to lack of funds. They had failed the people miserably by not providing proper food and medicine so that many were plagued with scurvy. After finally reaching New Braunfels and then Fredericksburg, the immigrants worked hard and intensive on their town lots and ten acre tracts that were granted to them. On Creek Street Maria Braeutigam received Lot No. 395, Valentin Hopfs Lot No. 396, Casper Marschalls Lot No. 420, while Wolfgang received Lot No. 564 on Ufer Street.

During 1848, Texas Legislature renewed the Fisher grant and certificates were issued on the Llano River and vicinity. Maria Elisabeth, the mother received a certificate for 640 acres in McCullough County. The county being lurked by Indians Mrs. Braeutigam decided to trade her certificate for a saddle.

Henry, Charles, and Christine Kensing were granted a certain certificate No. 44, calling for 640 acres in the Fischer - Miller Colony on the banks of the Llano River in the Howards District No. 1, being section No. 175 issued on July 19, 1848 by W. F. Evans Commissioner, to the heirs of David Kensing deceased who was entitled thereto as an emigrant introduced by virtue of a Colonization Contract between Fischer-Miller and the President of the Republic of Texas. These Sole Surviving heirs of David Kensing deceased, sold this Certificate Grant of 640 acres to Louis Martin for \$200 on March 30, 1855.

Desiring more land, close to Fredericksburg, Mrs. Valentin Braeutigam and son Johann Wolfgang bought some 99 acres on Drei Kricken now Luckenbach from the Joseph H. Moore Grant, Survey No. 182. To this place John Wolfgang brought his young bride Christine and his mother.

Christine Kensing was born on November 26, 1831 in Hammelspinge, Hanover Germany. Christine, a sister and three brothers came with their parents David born March 23, 1795 and Henriette Brehmeier (Bremeyer) Kensing born May 2, 1792, to Texas January 20, 1846 on the Ship Gerhard Herman. During their sojourn at Indianola, the mother, elder sister and one brother died of prevailing disease. The father moved to Victoria to start a blacksmith shop but soon became ill and passed on also. The young survivors, Henry Karl and Christine were cast from one strange family to another often on the

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verge of starvation. Christine, only 14 years of age, was taken in by a family in Austin and once by a family across from the Alamo while the brothers began to blacksmith in New Braunsfels. Karl and Christine ventured to Fredericksburg. Karl took up land on Honey Creek and Live Oak Creek and later proceeded westward to Squaw Creek and finally made his permanent home at Doss on the Threadgill. Henry homesteaded on Beaver Creek where he and his wife were brutally massarced by Commanche Indians.

Four years after arriving in Texas, Christine Kensing was married to Johann Wolfgang Braeutigam on September 1, 1850. John and Christine made their home at Drei Kricken or Grape Creek at Luckenbach where the Braeutigams had bought land. They lived there until 1870. During the twenty years that they lived there they lost their mother Marie Elizabeth, a son Heinrich and a daughter Emma. All except two of their children were born at Luckenbach.

In 1870, J. W. Braeutigam purchased some land 2 miles east of Fredericksburg on Highway 290 on the old San Antonio road. This was part of a Survey 36 which was patented by the Republic of Texas to Nathaniel Townsend as Assignee of W. O. Merriwether on December 6, 1845. Townsend sold the 640 acre for \$1 an acre to Johan Twohig on February 2, 1852. John Twohig sold an undivided one-half interest in the Survey to J. J. B Wright who was a doctor in the United States Army.

It was also part of Survey 34 located by Certificate No. 43 issued to Jose Soto and patented to John Twohig, assignee by patent No 230 Vol. 4 dated January 23, 1847. Upon this land was located the U. S. Fort Martin Scott. This fort was occupied only intermittently after 1850 and was abandoned after the end of the Civil War. With the property demolished by vandals, only the officers headquarters and the large rock stable were salvaged. Anna Braeutigam, age 12, oldest daughter helped cook the meals on an outdoor fireplace for her father and his helpers who renovated the place into a home. He also built a small store and saloon near the road; to this he added a grapevine arbor, planted cedars, hachberries and other native shrubs and trees. This place, known as Braeutigam Garten, was an entertainment center for the pioneers. This remarkable place was an example of what could be accomplished by a lone pioneer with the will and ability to build something out of the ordinary.

County Fairs, Fourth of July and Easter Celebrations brought out large crowds to Braeutigam's Garten. The first Gillespie County Fair was held here in 1881. On these feast days, supper was served consisting of meats, famed German herring salad, yeast bread and cakes. Dancing began in the afternoon to the music of a famous Mexican band and Schaefer's Band. At midnight festivities ceased with serving of cake and coffee. The Well was usually drawn dry which proves that the German people did not consume as much beer in the early days as is pictured in modern "A Night In Old Fredericksburg" celebration.

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At the Fairs, the feature entertainment besides the exhibits was horse racing and since there was much betting, large amounts of money changed hands. This money exchange perhaps motivated the robbery which brought about the murder of J. W. Braeutigam on September 3, 1884. Four men came to the store; two remained outside with the horses while the other men entered the store, demanded that Braeutigam turn over his money. This he refused so they shot and killed him. Henry, the youngest child, age 10 was the first to enter the store after the shots were heard. Dashing into the store, he saw a sight never to be forgotten by him, his father dead on the floor. During the month before this tragedy the Braeutigam family had already lost a young grand daughter Sophie (a daughter of Richard Braeutigam), a son Max who died of Typhoid. On the day of the murder, son Otto who had been deathly sick with Typhoid was sitting up on the doorstep for the first time.

Mrs. Braeutigam grieved and bewildered had to carry on with the help of her children, neighbors and friends. The doors of the saloon were closed from that day on. Different families bought the right to the concessions at the Fourth of July celebrations and the Annual Fair, which had to go on. Mr. and Mrs. Fritz Stoffers and family took care of the concessions for several years. Later the sons Otto and Emil married Minna and Anna Stoffers. It is interesting to note that they only charged 50¢ a plate at meal time. Nevertheless she stayed on the 640 acre Survey for forty years. Each child was started off with 42 acres living with the mother until a small love-nest house was built. The daughters would in time after their marriage sell their land to the brothers. Two of the sons left Gillespie County; August made his home in Kerrville and Richard bought land in Leon County, at Jewett, Texas.

The following were the eight surviving children that lived quite a long and useful life and from them stem the many descendants found in Gillespie county, all over the state of Texas and from coast to coast in the United States: August (M. Nellie Haddock), Anna (Mrs. Carl Schuchard), Richard (M. Bertha Weyrich), Emma (Mrs. Hardin Runnels), Otto (M. Minna Stoffers), Emil (M. Anna Stoffers), Christine (Mrs. W. W. Corby, and Henry (M. Clara Gold).

The youngest son Henry inherited the homestead and the mother stayed with the Henry Braeutigams until the last year of her life which was spent with her daughter Anna (Mrs. Carl Schuchard) in Fredericksburg, Texas. She died on November 18, 1924 at the age of almost 93. She will always be remembered for her neighborliness, kindness, meekness but firmness in character. Her influence reached far and she became a blessing in the life of the new colony.

John Wolfgang, who never turned anyone away hungry from his door was an efficient host deserving the title of "Friend to Man". He played the Zither and enjoyed singing deep bass in the Sang Vereins. He was proud of his relative, Frank Vander Stucken II, grandson of Mrs. Anna Schoenewolf Hopf who was a great composer, musician and band conductor. John Wolfgang's musical talent is

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reflected in his descendants, many of whom are good vocalists. He was generous, energetic and sociable. During the war between the states, John Wolfgang's loyalty remained with the government to which he had sworn allegiance when he became a citizen of the United States on May 12, 1851. Like the vast majority of Gillespie county settlers, he opposed slavery and secession.

His sudden death was a great shock to the county, for he was a widely loved and respected man. Hearts were filled with indignation and the outlaws were brought to justice by Ranger Baird.

Despite their hardships, both accepted the frontier as their heritage and contributed much to the development of Fredericksburg and Gillespie County. May we, as descendants of these great people, never forget to be grateful for our heritage.