Genealogy Report
Mathieu Klein

Contains details on three generations of Mathieu Klein

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Descendants of Mathieu Klein

Generation No. 1

1. Mathieu1 Klein was born 1748 in Commune de Herrlisheim, Province of Alsace, France, and died Dec 23, 1799 in Commune de Herrlisheim, Strasbourg, Bas-Rhin, France. He married Catherine Christmann. She was born Abt. 1760 in Drusenheim, and died Aft. 1817.

More About Mathieu Klein:
Occupation: Farmer

Children of Mathieu Klein and Catherine Christmann are:
   i. Jean Georges2 Klein, b. 1783, Commune de Herrlisheim, Bas-Rhin, Province of Alsace, France.
      More About Jean Georges Klein:
      Baptism: Oct 24, 1783, Commune de Herrlisheim, Bas-Rhin, Province of Alsace, France

2. ii. Therese Klein, b. 1784, Commune de Herrlisheim, Strasbourg, Bas-Rhin, France; d. Oct 22, 1852, Commune de Herrlisheim, Strasbourg, Bas-Rhin, France.
   iii. Andre Klein, b. 1787, Commune de Herrlisheim, Bas-Rhin, Province of Alsace, France.
      More About Andre Klein:
      Baptism: Nov 11, 1787, Commune de Herrlisheim, Bas-Rhin, Province of Alsace, France

3. iv. Catherine Klein, b. Nov 29, 1790, Commune de Herrlisheim, Strasbourg, Bas-Rhin, France; d. Jan 06, 1853.
   v. Marie Klein, b. 1793; d. Oct 03, 1846, Commune de Herrlisheim, Strasbourg, Bas-Rhin, France.

Generation No. 2

2. Therese2 Klein (Mathieu3) was born 1784 in Commune de Herrlisheim, Strasbourg, Bas-Rhin, France, and died Oct 22, 1852 in Commune de Herrlisheim, Strasbourg, Bas-Rhin, France. She married Jacques Gross, son of Michel Gross. He was born 1780 in Commune de Herrlisheim, Strasbourg, Bas-Rhin, France.

More About Therese Klein:
Date born 2: 1784
Baptism: Oct 18, 1784, Commune de Herrlisheim, Bas-Rhin, Province of Alsace, France

Notes for Jacques Gross:
Unless otherwise noted, information on the descendants of Jacques Gross and Theresa Klein was furnished by Kelly Vogel Cooper, Chantilly, Virginia. (Note to File - JP Rhein)

More About Jacques Gross:
Fact 1: Jan 19, 1825, Age on Act of Birth of his son Mathias is 45.
Occupation: Farmer

Children of Therese Klein and Jacques Gross are:
   i. Francoise3 Gross, b. Mar 06, 1813, Commune de Herrlisheim, Strasbourg, Bas-Rhin, France.
      More About Francoise Gross:
      Witness: Mar 06, 1813, Witnesses on the Act of Birth are Michel Gross, age 56, the father of Jacques and Joseph Keller, age 21, a farmer.

   ii. Therese Gross, b. May 12, 1815, Commune de Herrlisheim, Strasbourg, Bas-Rhin, France.
More About THERESE GROSS:
Witness: May 12, 1815, Witnesses on the Act of Birth are Michel Gross, age 56, the father of Jacques and Michel Gross, age 32, brother of Jacques Gross.

iii. JACQUES GROSS, b. Dec 03, 1817, Commune de Herrlisheim, Strasbourg, Bas-Rhin, France; d. Sep 09, 1850.
More About JACQUES GROSS:
Witness 1: Jun 24, 1850, Appears as a witness at the wedding of Jacques Rhein to Reine (Regina) Kistler in Herrlisheim.
Witness 2: Dec 03, 1817, Witnesses on the Act of Birth are Jean Baptiste Mockers, age 39, a teacher and Joseph Hocher, age 41.

iv. ANDRE GROSS, b. May 01, 1819, Commune de Herrlisheim, Strasbourg, Bas-Rhin, France.
More About ANDRE GROSS:
Fact 1: Appears to have died in infancy.
Witness: May 01, 1819, Witnesses on the Act of Birth are Jean Baptiste Mockers, age 45, a teacher and Jacques Lutz, age 42, a farmer.

v. ANDRE GROSS, b. Jul 02, 1820, Commune de Herrlisheim, Strasbourg, Bas-Rhin, France.
vi. JEAN MICHEL GROSS, b. Oct 14, 1822, Commune de Herrlisheim, Strasbourg, Bas-Rhin, France.
More About JEAN MICHEL GROSS:
Witness: Oct 14, 1822, Witnesses on the Act of Birth are Joseph Kistler, age 34, and Michel Kientz.

vii. MATHIAS GROSS, b. Jan 19, 1825, Commune de Herrlisheim, Strasbourg, Bas-Rhin, France; d. Mar 30, 1877, Newark, Essex County, New Jersey.

3. CATHERINE2 KLEIN (MATHIEU1) was born Nov 29, 1790 in Commune de Herrlisheim, Strasbourg, Bas-Rhin, France, and died Jan 06, 1853. She married DANIEL KISTLER Oct 04, 1817 in Commune de Herrlisheim, Strasbourg, Bas-Rhin, France, son of ARBOGASTE KISTLER and ROSINE HERRMANN. He was born Jul 01, 1785 in Commune de Herrlisheim, Province of Alsace, France, and died Apr 28, 1852 in Commune de Herrlisheim, Strasbourg, Bas-Rhin, France.

More About DANIEL KISTLER:
Fact 1: 1785, I am unable to explain the close date of the marriage of Arbogaste Kistler and Rosine Hermann to the birth of son Daniel. May be an error in reading and recording these dates. This will need to be investigated further.
Occupation 1: 1818, Farm labourer
Occupation 2: 1850, Labourer

More About DANIEL KISTLER and CATHERINE KLEIN:
Fact 1: Oct 04, 1817, The civil officer signing the Marriage Certificate is ??? Gless.
Marriage: Oct 04, 1817, Commune de Herrlisheim, Strasbourg, Bas-Rhin, France
Witness 3: Oct 04, 1817, Jacques Lutz, born 1791

Children of CATHERINE KLEIN and DANIEL KISTLER are:
i. DANIEL3 KISTLER, b. Oct 08, 1818, Commune de Herrlisheim, Strasbourg, Bas-Rhin, France; d. Oct 11, 1840, Algeria.

ii. REINE KISTLER, b. Jun 19, 1820, Commune de Herrlisheim, Strasbourg, Bas-Rhin, France.

More About REINE KISTLER:
Fact 1: Appears to have died in infancy.
Witness: 1820, Witnesses to Act of Birth were George Thomas and Jean Michel Schaffer, both labourers.
iii. ANASTASIA KISTLER, b. Sep 27, 1821, Commune de Herrlisheim, Strasbourg, Bas-Rhin, France; d. Dec 01, 1897.
iv. ANTOINE KISTLER, b. Feb 17, 1824, Commune de Herrlisheim, Strasbourg, Bas-Rhin, France; d. Oct 09, 1849, Algeria.
v. LOUIS KISTLER, b. Nov 08, 1825, Commune de Herrlisheim, Strasbourg, Bas-Rhin, France; d. Nov 19, 1825, Commune de Herrlisheim, Strasbourg, Bas-Rhin, France.
vi. REINE KISTLER, b. Mar 24, 1827, Commune de Herrlisheim, Strasbourg, Bas-Rhin, France; d. Aft. 1880, Commune de Herrlisheim, Alsace-Lorraine, Germany.
vii. ARBOGASTE KISTLER, b. Feb 28, 1829, Commune de Herrlisheim, Strasbourg, Bas-Rhin, France; d. Mar 04, 1829, Commune de Herrlisheim, Strasbourg, Bas-Rhin, France.
viii. SUZANNE KISTLER, b. Jul 1830; d. Dec 01, 1831, Commune de Herrlisheim, Strasbourg, Bas-Rhin, France.

Generation No. 3

4. ANDRE³ GROSS (THERESE² KLEIN, MATHIEU¹) was born Jul 02, 1820 in Commune de Herrlisheim, Strasbourg, Bas-Rhin, France. He married FRANSICKA BACHMANN in Newark, Essex County, New Jersey.

More About ANDRE GROSS:
Witness: Jul 02, 1820, Witnesses on the Act of Birth are Antoine Georg, age 26, laborer and Francois Grimm, age 27, day laborer.

More About ANDRE GROSS and FRANSICKA BACHMANN:
Marriage: Newark, Essex County, New Jersey

Children of ANDRE GROSS and FRANSICKA BACHMANN are:
i. ANDREAS⁴ GROSS, m. ANNA MAG. KNITTEL, Aug 17, 1886.
   More About ANDREAS GROSS and ANNA KNITTEL:
   Marriage: Aug 17, 1886
   Witness: Aug 17, 1886, Witnesses were Fanny Lang and Franciska Luby.

   ii. EMILA GROSS, m. JACOB LAGEL.

5. MATHIAS³ GROSS (THERESE² KLEIN, MATHIEU¹) was born Jan 19, 1825 in Commune de Herrlisheim, Strasbourg, Bas-Rhin, France, and died Mar 30, 1877 in Newark, Essex County, New Jersey. He married CAROLINA ZETWACH (ZETTWOG) May 03, 1856 in St. Mary's Catholic Church, Newark, Essex County, New Jersey, daughter of AUGUSTUS ZETTWOG and AMELIA STRACK. She was born Feb 1835 in Soufflenheim, Strasbourg, Bas-Rhin, France, and died Mar 22, 1891 in Newark, Essex County, New Jersey.

Notes for MATHIAS GROSS:
Mathias Gross, age 28, is listed in Germans to America 1850-1874, Occupation Farmer, Country France, Destination New York, Manifest ID Number 00007431, Ship’s Name is Franchise, Port of Embarkation is Harve, Date of Arrival is June 3, 1853, Captain’s Name is William F. Robinson, Mode of Travel is Sterage. (Note to File - JP Rhein)

More About MATHIAS GROSS:
Burial: St. Mary's Catholic Church, Essex County, New Jersey
Census: Jun 11, 1870, Value of real estate $4,000.
Fact 1: The names of Edward Locher and Jacob Zilliox appear on his will.
Occupation: Tailor
Residence: 1870, p3, Newark, Essex County, New Jersey
Witness: Jan 19, 1825, Witnesses on the Act of Birth are Jacques Kistler, age 33, labourer and Jean Baptiste Mockers, a teacher.

More About CAROLINA ZETWACH (ZETTWOG):
Burial: St. Mary's Catholic Church, Newark, Essex County, New Jersey
More About MATHIAS GROSS and CAROLINA (ZETTWOG):
Marriage: May 03, 1856, St. Mary's Catholic Church, Newark, Essex County, New Jersey
Witness: Bef. 1853, Augustin Ghless (Gless) and Jacob Zilliox.

Children of MATHIAS GROSS and CAROLINA (ZETTWOG) are:

i. CAROLINA4 GROSS, b. May 04, 1860, Newark, Essex County, New Jersey; d. Sep 18, 1918, Newark, Essex County, New Jersey.

ii. MAGDALENE GROSS, b. Jul 21, 1862, Newark, Essex County, New Jersey; d. Mar 16, 1863, Newark, Essex County, New Jersey.

iii. MAGDALENE GROSS, b. Nov 06, 1865, Newark, Essex County, New Jersey; d. Nov 28, 1944, Newark, Essex County, New Jersey; m. MORITZ HERZIG; b. Sep 10, 1862, Oberbergen, Breisach, Baden.

More About MAGDALENE GROSS:
Christening: Nov 12, 1865, St. Mary's Catholic Church, Essex County, New Jersey

More About MORITZ HERZIG:
Immigration: Aug 04, 1880

iv. JACOB AUGUST GROSS, b. Feb 01, 1869.

v. MARIA ELEONORA GROSS, b. Dec 02, 1870.

6. REINE3 KISTLER (CATHERINE2 KLEIN, MATHIEU1) was born Mar 24, 1827 in Commune de Herrlisheim, Strasbourg, Bas-Rhin, France11, and died Aft. 1880 in Commune de Herrlisheim, Alsace-Lorraine, Germany. She married JACQUES RHEIN Jun 24, 1850 in Commune de Herrlisheim, Strasbourg, Bas-Rhin, France11, son of ANTOINE RHEIN and MARIE KISTLER. He was born Feb 20, 1820 in Commune de Herrlisheim, Strasbourg, Bas-Rhin, France11, and died Apr 06, 1888 in Commune de Herrlisheim, Alsace-Lorraine, Germany12.

More About REINE KISTLER:
Fact 1: 1927, Christian name appear as Regina on the death certificate of her son Joseph Rhein in Pittsburgh, Allegheny County, Pennsylvania.13
Witness: 1827, Witness to Act of Birth was Jean George Laeng born 1782.14

Notes for JACQUES RHEIN:
The legal age of majority in France was set in 1803 at 21 years (lowered in 1974 to 18 years). However, there was an exception in the case of marriage: a man younger than 25 (and a woman younger than 21) needed the consent of their parents in order to marry. If there was disagreement between the parents, it was sufficient to have consent of the father. If one parent was dead or incapable of indicating consent, the consent of the remaining parent was sufficient. If both parents were dead or incapable of indicating consent, the grandparents took their place.

Even after having reached 25 (21 for women) it was still required for the prospective bride and groom to make a formal, respectful request to their parents for their counsel regarding the marriage -- this was necessary until the groom had reached 30 and the bride 25. If the parents were opposed to the marriage, this formal request was required to be repeated two more times, once a month. One month after a third unsuccessful request the marriage could go ahead.

And even after a prospective groom had reached 30 he was still required to make this formal request to his parents. In the event of an objection on the part of his parents he could go ahead with the marriage one month later.

If the parents and grandparents were all dead or all incapable of indicating consent, it was necessary for anyone younger than 21 to obtain consent of the conseil de famille.

There were stiff penalties for civil officials who didn't enforce these regulations.

The conseil de famille was composed of a justice of the peace and six blood relatives or relatives by marriage, half from the father's
side and half from the mother's side. (There were more complex regulations for the composition of the group, but this is the basic idea.)

"Son Tuteur", means the groom's guardian, usually appointed to that position by the groom's father just prior to his death, or by the groom's mother after her husband's death, or by the grandparents, or by the conseil de famille.

This is all from Le Code Civil (also known as the Code Napoleon), the body of French civil law first promulgated in 1803.
(Source - Robert Behra)

More About JACQUES RHEIN:
Fact 1: Death certificate of his son, Joseph Rhein, gives his Christian name as Jacob and states that he was born in Lorraine. I suspect that Louise Laeng Rhein gave his birthplace as Alsace-Lorraine but the individual completing the form elected to enter Lorraine

More About JACQUES RHEIN and REINE KISTLER:
Marriage: Jun 24, 1850, Commune de Herrlisheim, Strasbourg, Bas-Rhin, France
Witness: Jun 24, 1850, Witnesses to the Act of Marriage were Joseph Rhein, age 49, Jacques Gross age 33 and Thiebaud Schohn age 63.

Children of REINE KISTLER and JACQUES RHEIN are:

  i. ANASTASE RHEIN, b. Mar 10, 1851, Commune de Herrlisheim, Strasbourg, Bas-Rhin, France; d. Mar 24, 1851, Commune de Herrlisheim, Strasbourg, Bas-Rhin, France.

    More About ANASTASE RHEIN:
    Fact 1: 1851, Mother's christian name appears as Reine on Act of Birth.

  ii. ROSALIE RHEIN, b. Jan 16, 1853, Commune de Herrlisheim, Strasbourg, Bas-Rhin, France.

    More About ROSALIE RHEIN:
    Fact 1: 1853, Mother's christian name appears as Reine on the Act of Birth.
    Witness: 1853, Witnesses to Act of Birth were Antoine Gross and Jacques Alt.

  iii. MARIE RHEIN, b. May 17, 1855, Commune de Herrlisheim, Strasbourg, Bas-Rhin, France; d. May 25, 1855, Commune de Herrlisheim, Strasbourg, Bas-Rhin, France.

    More About MARIE RHEIN:
    Witness: 1855, Witnesses to Act of Birth were Charles Mockers and Jean George Adam.

  iv. ANTOINE RHEIN, b. Apr 02, 1856, Commune de Herrlisheim, Strasbourg, Bas-Rhin, France; d. Sep 29, 1919.

    More About ANTOINE RHEIN:
    Fact 1: 1856, Mother's christian name appears as Reine on the Act of Birth.
    Witness: 1856, Witnesses to Act of Birth were Charles Mockers and Jean George Adam.

  v. THERESA RHEIN, b. Feb 17, 1858, Commune de Herrlisheim, Strasbourg, Bas-Rhin, France; d. Apr 09, 1858, Commune de Herrlisheim, Strasbourg, Bas-Rhin, France.

    More About THERESA RHEIN:
    Fact 1: 1858, Mother's christian name appears as Reine on the Act of Birth.
    Witness: 1858, Witnesses to Act of Birth were Louis Pfaadt and George Adam.

  vi. THERESA RHEIN, b. Feb 1859, Commune de Herrlisheim, Strasbourg, Bas-Rhin, France; d. Jun 22, 1859,
Commune de Herrlisheim, Strasbourg, Bas-Rhin, France23.

vii. JOSEPH RHEIN, b. Apr 20, 1860, Commune de Herrlisheim, Strasbourg, Bas-Rhin, France24; d. Nov 13, 1865, Commune de Herrlisheim, Strasbourg, Bas-Rhin, France25.

More About JOSEPH RHEIN:
Fact 1: 1860, Mother's christian name appears as Reine on the Act of Birth.26
Witness: 1860, Witness to Act of Birth was Joseph Werner.26

viii. PIERRE RHEIN, b. Aug 11, 1862, Commune de Herrlisheim, Strasbourg, Bas-Rhin, France26; d. Mar 19, 1929, Commune de Herrlisheim, Strasbourg, Bas-Rhin, France27; m. THERESE BECKER, Mar 01, 1886, Commune de Herrlisheim, Strasbourg, Bas-Rhin, France27; b. Jan 14, 1865, Commune de Herrlisheim, Strasbourg, Bas-Rhin, France27; d. Nov 10, 1932, Commune de Herrlisheim, Strasbourg, Bas-Rhin, France27.

More About PIERRE RHEIN:
Fact 1: 1862, Mother's christian name was Reine on the Act of Birth.28
Witness 1: 1862, Witnesses to Act of Birth were Jean George Adam and Louis Pfaadt.28
Witness 2: May 03, 1890, Was a witness at the wedding of Joseph Rhein to Louise Laeng in Herrlisheim.28

More About PIERRE RHEIN and THERESE BECKER:
Marriage: Mar 01, 1886, Commune de Herrlisheim, Strasbourg, Bas-Rhin, France29

ix. FELIX RHEIN, b. Mar 03, 1864, Commune de Herrlisheim, Strasbourg, Bas-Rhin, France30; d. Feb 08, 1865, Commune de Herrlisheim, Strasbourg, Bas-Rhin, France31.

More About FELIX RHEIN:
Fact 1: 1864, Mother's christian name appears as Reine on the Act of Birth.32
Fact 2: 1864, Christian name may be Felica. Handwriting difficult to read.
Witness: 1864, Witness to Act of Birth was Jean Michel Pfaadt.32

x. JOSEPH RHEIN, b. Apr 13, 1866, Commune de Herrlisheim, Strasbourg, Bas-Rhin, France, later Alsace-Lorraine, Germany; d. Mar 19, 1927, Pittsburgh, Allegheny County, Pennsylvania; m. LOUISE LAENG, May 03, 1890, Commune de Herrlisheim, Alsace-Lorraine, Germany; b. May 15, 1866, Commune de Herrlisheim, Strasbourg, Bas Rhin, France, later Alsace-Lorraine, Germany; d. Dec 11, 1954, Pittsburgh, Allegheny County, Pennsylvania.

Notes for JOSEPH RHEIN:
Joseph Rhein and Louise Laeng arrived Port of New York on May 20, 1890 from Le Havre on La Champagne. L. Boyer as Ship's Master. Joseph is passenger number 808, farmer, and Louise (surname spelled Lang) is passenger number 197, no occupation, travelling 3rd class. I am unable to explain as to why her maiden name is listed on the ship's manifest, other than possibly she obtained her authorization to immigrate prior to the date of their marriage. (Source - Examination of copy of the ship manifest, New York Passenger Lists, 1851-1891, microfilm roll 548, List number 689)
The ship La Champagne was a 7,087 gross ton vessel, length 493.4 ft x beam 51.8 ft, two funnels, four masts, single screw and a speed of 17 knots. Accommodation for 390 - 1st, 65 -  2nd and 600 3rd class passengers. Built by COT, St. Nazaire, she was launched for Compagnie Generale Transatlantique (French Lines) on May 15, 1885. Her maiden voyage started on May 22, 1886 when she left Havre for New York. On August 7, 1887 she collided with and sank the French ship Ville de Rio Janeiro, sustaining serious damage herself. Rebuilt in 1896 with two masts, new engines and her 3rd class accommodations increased to 1,500. On February 17, 1898 she fractured her propeller shaft and drifted until February 23rd, when she was sighted by the Warren Liner Roman who towed her to Halifax. Her last Le Havre to New York sailing started on January 21, 1905 and she was then transferred to the Mexican service. She resumed Havre - New York for two round voyages in March and April 1906 and then returned to the Mexico service. In 1913 she was transferred to St. Nazaire - Panama sailings and on May 28, 1915 stranded at St. Nazaire and broke her back. (Source - North Atlantic Seaway by N. R. P. Bonsor, volume 2, page 656)
The Certificate of Death for Joseph Rhein lists his father as Jacob Rhein and his mother as Regina Kistler. It states that Joseph was born in Lorraine. I suspect that Louise Laeng Rhein gave his place of birth as Alsace-Lorraine, which is the way she always described where they were from in Germany, and the person completing the death certificate elected to enter only Lorraine. (Note to File - JP Rhein)

Served with the German Army in the German Territories in Africa between 1884 and 1890. I do not know in which of the Territories he may have been during this period. Extracts from various articles state that
Germany came late to its colonial empire, acquiring Toga, Cameroon, German East Africa (present-day Tanzania) and German Southwest Africa (present-day Namibia) by 1885. The Berlin Conference, called in 1884 by German Chancellor Otto von Bismarck, established African colonial boundaries. This empire would last only 35 years, until the end of World War I (1914-1918). (Note to File - JP Rhein)

Joseph Rhein and Louise Laeng Rhein were parishioners of St. Augustine Catholic Church, 37th Street, Pittsburgh, Allegheny County, Pennsylvania.

"St. Augustine was founded in 1863 as a German ethnic parish. The origin of the parish can actually be traced to the year 1854. Germans had been settling in Lawrenceville for a number of years. They attended St. Philomena to attend Mass and sent their children to school at either St. Philomena or the English school at St. Mary. Concerned with the distance that the children had to walk to attend St. Philomena, local Catholics in cooperation with the Redemptorist Fathers at St. Philomena established a school in a Lawrenceville home. As the number of children attending the school increased, the school was moved to an unused storeroom and later to a community hall.

The school's first few years were unsettled. Various teachers came and went and the school discontinued operations for a brief period. Eventually, local German Catholics decided that the only way to have an effective school was to establish a parish to oversee it. In 1860, a meeting was held to take steps to establish a parish and school. In April of 1860, land was purchased for a parish.

Assisting in the development of the new parish was Fr. George Kircher, who had been appointed pastor of Holy Trinity in the Hill District in 1860. In 1861, he began working with the German Catholics in Lawrenceville to establish an independent parish. In that year, the bishop granted permission to build a church for the Germans in Lawrenceville. However, they first built a school which was dedicated on December 15, 1861. Beginning on February 2, 1862, Mass was celebrated in the school.

On June 22, 1862 the cornerstone of the new church was laid. In December of that year a resident pastor was assigned to the parish. The completed church was dedicated on November 26, 1863. By the end of the century, this church needed extensive repair and renovation. Rather than expend money on the existing building, the parish decided to build a new church. The cornerstone of the new church was laid on October 29, 1899 and the completed church was dedicated on May 21, 1901. The old church was renovated and turned into a parish hall. Part of the tower was removed and the transepts were closed with a wall. This building was eventually torn down in 1955.

Beginning in the middle of the twentieth century, people began moving from the city. By the 1990's Lawrenceville could no longer sustain the number of existing churches. In 1993, St. Augustine was merged with three other parishes to form the new Our Lady of the Angels parish. St. Augustine church remains open and serves the new parish." (Source - Diocese of Pittsburgh)

"As far back as 1854, a little school for German children of the neighborhood was being maintained in the home of Franz Xavier Helbling opposite the Allegheny Cemetery on Butler Street. Gradually the people interested organized St. Augustine's Roman Catholic Church and built a little schoolhouse on the hillside of Thirty-seventh Street. The building served as a church also from its completion in 1862 until the fall of 1863 when a church was completed on Butler Street between Thirty-sixth and Thirty-seventh Streets. The school was enlarged by digging out beneath it and making it a two story building. Until 1874 the parish was in charge of a Capuchin monk. In that year other members of the order arrived and established St. Augustine Monastery, which is the mother house of the St. Augustine Capuchin Province of Pennsylvania. There is also a convent in connection with the church." (Source - Volume 2, Pittsburgh of Today, Its Resources and People, by Frank C. Harper, New York, The American Historical Society, Inc., 1931-1932)

"About 1897 or 1898 there came to Pittsburgh a young man, John T. Comes who was given the commission of preparing drawings for a new church for St. Augustine Parish, Thirty-seventh Street. The completion of St. Augustine's Church in 1901 marked a new era in the history of ecclesiastical arts in the diocese. It was acclaimed as a masterpiece." (Source - Catholic Pittsburgh's One Hundred Years, Published under the patronage of His Excellency the Most Reverend Hugh C. Boyle, Loyola University Press, Chicago, Ill., 1943)

St. Augustine (Lawrenceville, PA) Parish History

HISTORY OF ST. AUGUSTINE PARISH, Lawrenceville, Pa., 1863 -- 1988
(Extracted from St. Augustine Parish 125th Anniversary Book, 1863-1988)
Lawrenceville could boast of only one landmark in 1860. That was the arsenal built as a result of the war of 1812. Other than that, nothing stood out in Lawrenceville. Seventy new houses went up in the district in 1860, and Butler Street was paved, but the biggest thing that happened in Lawrenceville that year was a meeting. The Catholic leaders of the area had been meeting off and on for several years trying to establish a school for their children. Every time a teacher had to resign or a bigger classroom was needed, the people got together to work out their problem. But in 1860 the meeting was more important than usual. What the people wanted was a bigger school. And this time their plans included a church. They drew up the Society of German Catholics of Lawrenceville. With the spirit of Captain Lawrence who died ordering his men: "Don't give up the ship," the people living in the Borough named after him were going to move ahead against all odds.

Along with loans, the committee sponsored one picnic after another to raise funds for building. As plans congealed they obtained a German-speaking priest to say Mass for them regularly. Father George Kircher now became the organizer of the parish. First the school went up. While the church was under construction services were held in the school. The first Mass in the school took place on February 2, 1862, with Vespers in the afternoon. Father Kircher had Charles Bartberger sketch the plans for the church September 29, 1861. The committee approved the plans the next month. At that same meeting Mr. Landelin Vogel suggested that the parish should select St. Augustine as its patron. The reason for the choice was not any special devotion to the saint, but rather a way of expressing recognition to Mr. Augustine Hoeveler, the leading organizer of Catholic activities in Lawrenceville. Right from the start, the parish was blessed with strong leaders.

In other ways the parish was still very small. At the same meeting in which the patron was chosen, the members of the building association made a pledge of paying ten cents monthly to the church fund. By piling up their dimes, the parishioners eventually raised the twelve thousand dollars needed to build the first St. Augustine Church. The cornerstone was laid June 22, 1862. Even before the church was under roof, in December of 1862, Bishop Domenec appointed Father Franz Schmidt as the first resident pastor of the parish. In less than a year he had to resign because of bad health. Father John Nepomucene Tamchina, a missionary Capuchin, assumed the responsibilities of pastor just two months before the dedication of the new church.

Bishop Domenec blessed the church Thanksgiving Day, November 26, 1863. Religious organizations from Pittsburgh and Allegheny marched in procession. The new church could seat 650. Its 150 foot tower faced Butler Street. It was of red brick Romanesque in style, a hundred feet long. Lawrenceville had a new landmark. During the next ten years the parish was busy paying off its debts. The biggest achievement of those ten years was the establishment of the means to keep the parish thriving for the future. Father Tamchina secured Sisters for the school. From the founding of the school in 1854 lay teachers conducted the classes. For one reason or another a new teacher had to be found each September. The perennial problem sometimes led to hasty decisions and poorly qualified teachers. But Father Tamchina resolved the difficulty in 1871. The Sisters of St. Francis were just eight blocks away. After they opened St. Francis Hospital in 1866 they began to accept teaching assignments in the German parishes. November 8, 1871 the Sisters took over the responsibilities of St. Augustine School. This was the kind of addition which was more important than a new building. The Catholic of that age were convinced that Sisters were the best teachers in the world. According to the chronicler, even the children rejoiced. The parish took on its first Franciscanism. Just two years later, 1873, the Franciscan influence became an intimate feature of the parish. The Capuchin Fathers were invited to the parish November 7, 1873. They came from Germany. Bismarck was suppressing Religious Orders as part of his program to nationalize the state. The Capuchins were told to prepare to leave.

While the Capuchins were being expelled from Bavaria, Bishop Domenec was searching for German-speaking priests for his parishes. The persecution in Germany became a blessing for Pittsburgh. Father Hyacinth Epp, O.F.M. Cap., assumed the pastorate of St. Augustine's April 19, 1874. From then on the parish reflected the atmosphere of a monastery parish. Devotions and societies were those of the Capuchins. St. Augustine's was no longer an ordinary parish. Connected to it was the headquarters of a new province of Capuchins. This would set the decisions for parishes in a dozen states where the members of the province would minister. Less than a month after he became pastor, Fr. Hyacinth established the Third Order of St. Francis in the parish. The parish intensified its Franciscan flavor. Up till then Third Order members who migrated from Germany retained their devotion to St. Francis, but now it was organized into a thriving fraternity. From the opening date the monthly meetings went on to the present. The only change made was that of language, for, originally, the sermons at the monthly meetings were in German.

Along with the spiritual growth of the parish, Father Hyacinth had to keep pace with the increase in members. Hundreds of families had to relocate when the Union Depot was built by the Pennsylvania Railroad. Many of the families moved to Lawrenceville, with the result that St. Augustine Church had to be expanded. A hundred-foot transept was
added in 1874, according to plans drawn by Brother Eleutherius, one of the Capuchins who arrived with Father Hyacinth. At the time of enlarging the church, Brother also carved the main altar, the pulpit and the communion rail. After the remodeling, "St. Augustine's was considered one of the finest churches in Pittsburgh." It seated a thousand. Brother Eleutherius planned to carve five altars in all, but he died before completing the task. He was a victim of smallpox June 18, 1877. Brother was the first of the Capuchins to be buried from St. Augustine's. He was thirty-eight years old. Another interesting friar of those early days was Father Maurice Greeck, O.F.M. Cap. Father Maurice had been an officer in the German army. He became the second Capuchin pastor of St. Augustine's.

In July, 1877, striking railroad employees led a riot in Lawrenceville. The militia tried to restore order but the mob forced the soldiers to retreat. In the attempt one of the soldiers was wounded in front of St. Augustine's Church. The Fathers immediately slipped him through the church into the monastery, where they gave him first aid and sent him to St. Francis Hospital. In the meantime the rioters tried to force their way into the monastery to capture the soldier. It was at that point that Father Maurice relied on his training as an officer. He just stood in the doorway with an air of authority and ordered the rioters away. They left without further protest.

By 1888 the growing population of Lawrenceville made a new school necessary for the parish. Father Maurice was again pastor at the time. Each wage earner pledged fifteen dollars. March 3, 1889, Bishop Phelan of Pittsburgh blessed the new school. The twelve-room building cost forty-five thousand dollars. Typical of the spirit of St. Augustine's, the school was one of the best equipped in the city. Newspaper clippings of the day referred to it as one of the most modern schools in western Pennsylvania. In addition to all the subjects taught in the public school, the parish school conducted extra classes in the German language, and, of course, courses in religion. During that same year a new monastery and rectory was completed, the present quarters of the Capuchins. The third floor of the present building was added in 1905. Ten years after the monastery was built the existing convent was completed. The parish constantly demonstrated a thriving growth.

The present church came not so much from the need of expansion, but because the old church needed extensive repairs. Father Charles Speckert, O.F.M. Cap., the pastor, called on Mrs. Mary Regina Frauenheim and her daughter Miss Rose, to ask for a substantial contribution for the renovation of the church. The Frauenheim family had been bountiful toward the parish in the past. The pastor was hoping that they would now pay for windows for the remodeling of the church. The ladies quietly objected that such an old building was not really worth expensive windows. Father Charles teasingly remarked that if the good ladies were willing to donate the small sum of fifty thousand dollars then he would do more than renovate; he could build a new, more beautiful church. It seemed almost a joke at the time. The debt in the parish was already thirty thousand dollars. But the Frauenheims did not take it as a joke. They asked for time to think about it. Mr. Aloisius Frauenheim called on Father Charles a few days later to pledge the fifty thousand dollars. With such generosity among the parishioners, the pastor could hardly refuse. Sixteen houses were cleared from the site where the church now stands. The property alone absorbed the generous donation, costing more than forty-eight thousand dollars. Since the project came so spontaneously, no one really had an idea of what kind of church to build. So they looked around, trying to find something they would like. One of the friars in the monastery came across a picture of St. Benno's Church in Munich. It immediately caught the pastor's fancy. That was it, Mr. John T. Comes used the picture for a model in sketching the new church. The plans looked good, but the lowest bid looked forbidding. With a dept of thirty thousand dollars hanging over the parish, contractors were asking another one hundred thousand for the new church. The Frauenheim family relieved the situation by donating another fifty thousand dollars.

Five thousand people attended the cornerstone laying ceremony. The parishioners' interest ran high all through the construction of the church. They seemed to count the layers of vitrified brick as the masons laid the walls. Layer after layer carried the walls to the climax of a dome ninety-two feet from the floor of the church. The towers went on for fifty feet more, twin arms raised in prayer, reaching a hundred and forty-eight feet over Lawrenceville. When the towers extended their full salute to God, the last stone in place, the people and clergy dedicated their church May 12, 1901. A procession from the old church carried the Blessed Sacrament over a flower strewn path to the new tabernacle. As the procession moved out from the church the bells clanged their farewell. Just as the last clang of the smaller bells faded the deep, musical bells of the new church welcomed the procession to the bigger, more beautiful house of God. Just eleven years later Father Ignatius Weisbruch, O.F.M. Cap., paid off the last portion of the building debt. The date can hardly seem very remote to older parishioners who can still remember Fr. Ignatius.
Throughout the history of St. Augustine's the main theme which arises most often is change and the ability and adaptability of the physical structures as well as the parishioners to accept these changes. With the promulgation of the Apostolic Instruction, Custas Fidei, in April 1969, and Immensae Cartitatis on January 23, 1973, lay persons were given permission to distribute communion both during Mass and outside Mass. On December 1, 1974, the first Parish Council was installed with the concept of finding an effective way of participation by the entire Christian community in the mission of the Church. Today the Parish Council is now called the Council of Ministries and is comprised of many dedicated people who help keep the St. Augustine Community unified and filled with spiritual values. The roots of St. Augustine's had been firmly planted a long time ago by many dedicated people who believed the Catholic faith was the center of their lives. These values have remained constant. Once again the parishioners have been asked to contribute to the renovation of St. Augustine Church. In this the 125th anniversary of St. Augustine Parish, we have again seen the generosity and unselfishness of the parishioners who made many sacrifices to fortify, maintain and preserve our structure for another 100 years as well as the faith values which the Church symbolizes.

On October 23, 1958, the official celebration of the 125th anniversary occurred rededicating our church, our Parish, and ourselves to God for now and for the future. There was a Liturgy of Thanksgiving at 11 am, celebrated by Bishop Donald W. Wuerl, followed by an informal reception in the Parish Hall for the entire parish family. The unity and Christian love for one another are typical qualities of the Augustine community and can be summed up by a quote of St. Augustine himself: "The Kingdom of Heaven requires no other price than yourself, the value of it is yourself; give YOURSELF to it and you shall have it."

(This history was taken in part from the St. Augustine Tour Book and from previous anniversary Souvenir Books.)

More About JOSEPH RHEIN:
Burial: Mar 23, 1927, St. Augustine Cemetery, Shaler Township, Allegheny County, Pennsylvania
Census 1: 1910, Lists number of children as seven and number living as three.
Census 2: 1900, List number of children as four and number living as two.
Fact 1: 1866, Mother's Christian name appears as Reine on the Act of Birth.
Immigration 1: May 04, 1890, Departed Herrlisheim, the day following the wedding, for the United States.
Immigration 2: 1890, Immigrated to United States of America settling in Pittsburgh, Allegheny County, Pennsylvania.
Naturalization 1: Jan 26, 1898, Admitted as a Citizen of the United States in Western District of Pennsylvania, United States of America. Resided at 3931 Howley Avenue, 16th Ward, Pittsburgh, Allegheny County, Pennsylvania. Was a native of Germany and a subject of the Emperor of Germany.
Naturalization 2: Jul 11, 1894, In the Court of Quarter Sessions of Allegheny County, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania declared his intention to become a citizen of the United States.
Naturalization 3: Jan 26, 1898, Witness was John (Frisch?).
Occupation 1: 1900, Day laborer
Occupation 2: 1920, Janitor (school janitor at St. Augustine Parish, 35th Street, Pittsburgh, Allegheny County, Pennsylvania)
Residence 1: Aft. 1911, 4007 Mintwood Street, Pittsburgh, Allegheny County, Pennsylvania
Residence 2: 1898, 3931 Howley Avenue, Pittsburgh, Allegheny County, Pennsylvania.
Residence 3: 1900, 16th Ward, 3931 Cabinet Alley, Pittsburgh, Allegheny County, Pennsylvania (Dwelling number 58, Family number 73)
Residence 5: 1920, 4007 Mifflin (later changed to Mintwood) Street, Pittsburgh, Allegheny County, Pennsylvania.
Witness: 1866, Witnesses to Act of Birth were Jacques Kientz, hostlier, and Dominique Henninger,
labourer.47

Notes for LOUISE LAENG:
Due to the close relationship between Louisa Laeng Rhein of Pittsburgh, Allegheny County, Pennsylvania and the Gless family who resided on a garden farm in Shaler Township, Allegheny County, Pennsylvania from about 1890 to 1952, I have tentatively attached Rosalie Adam, born about 1815 to 1825 in Commune de Herrlisheim, Strasbourg, Bas-Rhin, France (later Alsace-Lorraine, Germany), a daughter of Jean George Adam and Catherine Laeng, as being married to Joseph Gless, pending further investigation. Antoine Mertzin was a witness at the Act of Birth for Adelina Gless, born October 1870 in Commune de Herrlisheim, daughter of Jacques Gless and Josephine George. Angela Mertzin was a sponsor at the baptism of Rosa Rhein, daughter of Joseph Rhein and Louise Laeng Rhein, at St. Augustine Church, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, on May 17, 1891. John Schohn, from Alsace-Lorraine, who lived in Sharpsburg, Allegheny County, Pennsylvania during the period 1920 to 1940 was a friend of both the Rheins and the Glesses. A Jean Michel Schohn was a witness at the Act of Birth for Francoise Gless, Commune de Herrlisheim, July 1841, daughter of John Michel Gless and Adele Schmitt. (Note to File - JPRhein)

More About LOUISE LAENG:
Burial: Dec 14, 1954, St. Augustine Cemetery, Shaler Township, Allegheny County, Pennsylvania48
Census: 1910, Number of children 7, living 3. Have accounted for three of the children who died in infancy. The fourth may have been baptized shortly after birth at home and then died in infancy. No church record available when baptized at home.49
Fact 1: 1890, Emigrated to United States of America.49
Fact 2: Jan 18, 1937, Application for a Social Security Number for Joseph Peter Rhein lists her maiden name as Laeng, however, a number of records in the United States show her maiden name as Lang.50
Witness 1: 1866, Benjamin Laeng, age 40, a weaver, listed as Premier Temoin on the Act of Birth. Constate Joseph Schohn.51
Witness 2: 1866, Michel Schiff, age 50, a field worker, listed as Second Temoin on the Act of Birth.51

More About JOSEPH RHEIN and LOUISE LAENG:
Marriage: May 03, 1890, Commune de Herrlisheim, Alsace-Lorraine, Germany52
Witness: May 03, 1890, Peter Rhein uncle of the bridegroom and Alexander Laeng, father of the bride.52

Endnotes

1. Information furnished by Valerie Wenger Kastner, Rountzenheim, France..
2. Examination of copy of applicable document, Birth Certificate, Copy of The Act of Birth, Marriage License, Register listing marriage date, etc..
3. Examination of Copy of Birth Certificate, Copy of Baptismal Certificate or applicable Register listing such information..
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9. Examination of copy of applicable document, Birth Certificate, Copy of The Act of Birth, Register of Birth, Marriage License, Register listing marriage date, etc..
10. 1870 Federal Census.
11. Examination of copy of applicable document, Birth Certificate, Copy of The Act of Birth, Marriage License, Register listing marriage date, etc..
12. Information furnished by Valerie Wenger Kastner, Rountzenheim, France..
13. Examination of copy of Certificate of Death or Register listing record of death or from inscription taken from gravesite marker..
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41. 1900 Federal Census for Pennsylvania.
42. 1920 United States Census.
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44. 1900 Federal Census for Pennsylvania.
45. 1910 U. S. Census for Pennsylvania, Allegheny County, Code 140 R500 025 0355 0414.
46. 1920 United States Census.
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