

May 1, 2004

COPY

HARMON G. GIESENSCHLAG (1875-1938) AND ALMA SCHILLING GIESENSCHLAG (1877-1969)

JOACHIM AND ANNIE GIESENSCHLAG:

- . He was born May 22, 1817, in Damelock, Prussia, and died July 2, 1880. Buried in Giesenschlag Cemetery, Mound Prairie Community, Burleson County, Texas.
- . Annie was born June 3, 1820; died May 31, 1891. (Giesenschlag Cemetery).
- . They came to Washington County in 1855 and 1879 to Burleson County. Children brought with them included:
- . CHRISTIAN GIESENSCHLAG: He was born December 10, 1847; died November 6, 1924.
 - . He married Mary Broesche in Washington County, November 11, 1874. (Daughter of William Broesche).
 - . They moved to Mound Prairie in Burleson County in _____.

One of their children was:

- . HARMON G. GIESENSCHLAG (1875-1938) (Oldest child)
 - . He married ALMA SCHILLING in Washington County (Burton) on November 28, 1906.
 - . Alma was born in 1877 and died in 1969.
 - . Both are buried in the Oaklawn Cemetery in Somerville, TX.

Harmon and Alma had two children:

- 1) ELVERA GIESENSCHLAG: She was born in 1908; died in 1969.
 - . Elvera graduated in 1926 at Somerville High School.
 - . She married FRED RENFRO, and they lived in Corpus Christi, TX.

ELVERA GIESENSCHLAG RENFRO AND FRED RENFO:

- . They had three children:
 - 1) Son _____ (Deceased)
 - 2) Son _____ (Deceased)
 - 3) Daughter: BARBARA RENFRO MC CLAUGHERTY.
 - . Barbara had no children.
 - . She was born in 1935 and was three years old when her grandfather, HARMON GIESENSCHLAG, died.
 - . She is 69 years old.
 - . Barbara and her husband live at:
 - . 4825 Ingram Drive
 - Corpus Christi, TX 78415
 - . PHONE: 361-853-8997
 - . Barbara's brothers had children.

MILTON GIESENSCHLAG AND WIFE, CELIA:

- . They had no children.
- . Milton was in the Air Force in World War II, and remained in the service until retirement. He retired with the rank of Major, from Randolph Field, TX., and they moved to Florida.

- . Celia was a teacher; she taught children who lived on the Air Force base, and she taught in Florida after moving there.
- . Milton and Celia are deceased.

The Harmon Giesenschlag family lived in Somerville, Texas, where he was a carpenter/builder.

Harmon built a home for his family on Seventh Street in Somerville in 1906 or 1907. When they moved from Somerville to Corpus Christi, the Giesenschlags sold the house to Mr. and Mrs. _____ Moore. Mr. and Mrs. Moore later sold the house to Mr. and Mrs. Willie W. Neinast. Their daughter, Mabel Neinast Haddox currently lives in the home.

Harmon also built the First Lutheran Church of Somerville in 1926 for a cost of \$225.00.

Harmon built a house for Cy and Eoline Lauderdale on Eighth Street in Somerville (near the U.S. Corps of Engineers Headquarters).

It is thought he built a two story home on Highway 36 (across from the Dairy Queen) for his sister, Carrie Giesenschlag Blocker, and her husband.

Harmon's granddaughter, Barbara Renfro McClaugherty, said her grandfather did carpenter work in Corpus Christi too. He died of cancer in 1938 at the age of 63 years. Alma lived with Elvera and her family and she died in 1969 having attained the age of 92 years.

To gather informaton on Mr. Harmon Giesenschlag, the following persons were contacted. Most of them knew nothing on his life in the Somerville (Mound Prairie) area. Those contacted were:

Barron Giesenschlag; Inez Giesenschlag Hill; Mary Gatling Simmons; Beulah Wood; Pansy Houston; Sharon Hubenak Woods; Frances Ann Maler; Yuvon Hodge; Bobby Neinast; Gloria Kaltwasser Sager; Lillie Novosad Lewis; Alma Lewis Novosad; W. H. Giesenschlag, Jr.; and Leon (Buck) Giesenschlag; and also Barney M. Davis. Barbara McClaugherty was contacted too by phone.

INTERVIEWS:

Mary Gatling Simmons:

The Somerville Museum has a newspaper clipping of MRS. HARMON (ALMA) GIESENSCHLAG'S obituary. Also, a printed program outlining the Somerville High School Commencement Exercises for the Class of 1926. (Elvera Giesenschlag was listed.)

Pansy Houston:

She was in the Class of 1929 and knew Elvera, a beautiful young woman.

She said Harmon Giesenschlag had one arm missing, but she did not know how that happened. She heard folks talk about him building the Lauderdale Home on Eighth Street in Somerville, and that he was not paid for his labors when the home was completed. She said he 'left Somerville with a broken heart.'

Yuvon Hodge:

She was a relative of the Moores who purchased the Giesenschlag home in Somerville. She grew up in that house, but she was young and didn't know the family. The Moores did not discuss anything about the Giesenschlags that would be helpful.

W. H. Giesenschlag Jr.:

He recalls the name of Harmon Giesenschlag from the family history, but knew nothing about him personally because he was dead years before Bill was born. He did state he was a carpenter and built the Lutheran Church. I asked him about one arm, and he said, "Oh, I never heard anything about that probably because of my age."

Barney M. Davis:

He was a freshman in high school when Elvera was a senior and said didn't remember much about the family. When asked about Harmon having one arm missing, Barney said he didn't remember anything specific about that.

He would be available to answer further questions perhaps.

Leon (Buck) Giesenschlag:

He remembers his parents talking about Harmon. Buck was nine years old when his father died of blood poisoning. His dad died at the age of 41.

He recalls his parents talking about Harmon working on a church near Gay Hill. It sits on the right (when traveling to Brenham) on a high hill. Giesenschlag had a saw accident and lost an arm. After that he and his family moved to Corpus Christi.

Buck will be glad to discuss this with anyone. His phone number is 272-8732. He was 87 years old last week, and is still quite active in ranching and enjoys visiting his wife daily in the rest home, and going to dances. Likes to dance.

Barbara Renfro Mc Clagherty:

Barbara Renfro McClaugherty: - Continued:

Barbara would fill in some records on the family since she has pictures and family papers. (Her husband is interested in geneology.)

Her grandfather inherited a part of the CHRISTIAN GIESENSCHLAG ESTATE and he was deceased therefore, Barbara was the recipient of xxx number of acres of the land which is located on FM 60 near the Giesenschlag Cemetery. Barbara sold this property to Charles and Sharon Hubenak Wood and they raise goats on this land which is across the highway from their home.

She was born in 1935 and Harmon died in 1938, therefore she was three years old when he died. She states she does remember her grandfather and remembers him well. He gave her 'horsey' rides on his knee. But, she said he did not have a missing limb.

She said she would be glad to talk with anyone about her grandfather and what she knows about him, but she was young.

She had two brothers but both are deceased. She also has nieces or nephews but did not go into details.

OTHERS:

The other persons contacted did not know anything about Harmon Giesenschlag since he moved away and they had no contact with him and because he was of another generation they were not too familiar with.

CECIL GIESENSCHLAG

Cecil Giesenschlag upon graduation from high school in 1938 attended Texas A&M College for a short while until the beginning of World War II at which time he moved to Dallas to attend aeronautical engineer school. Upon completion, he enlisted in the Army Air Corp and served as crew chief stationed in Attu and Kiska in the Aleutian Islands. Upon discharge after the war, Cecil returned to Texas A&M majoring in agronomy. During his junior year he left college to return to a career of farming and ranching. Cecil has served as a county committeeman for the ASCS office for 15 years. He is a member of the Evangelical Reformed Lutheran Church, Lee Scott Lodge No. 793 AF & AM; and the Board of Trustees of the Snook Independent School District. Cecil was married to Dorothy Joyce Howry on October 7, 1949. Joyce is the daughter of Rufus Howry and Myrtle Ferrell Covington. She was reared in the Hix Community and moved to Caldwell sometime later and graduated from Caldwell High School in 1948. She is a housewife; a secretary for Joe Varisco Farms; a member of Lone Oak Baptist Church where she served as a Sunday School teacher for several years; and a member of the Eastern Star. To this union was born three children, Cecil Rodney; Phyllis Ann who married John M. Moore and who resides in Bryan, Texas; and Regina Lea. Because of their farming and ranching practices, Cecil was given the Farm Innovator Award by the Shell Chemical Company. In 1979 upon completion of the new Animal Science Department at Texas A&M, Cecil and W.H. Giesenschlag, Jr., placed the family brand on display in the center.

Cecil Rodney Giesenschlag was born in Bryan, Texas on April 15, 1951. He attended Snook Public Schools from 1957 through 1969, at which time he graduated. During his high school years, Rodney was a starting player on the 1969 Class B State basketball championship team and was valedictorian of his graduating class. Rodney attended Texas A&M University from 1969 to 1973 majoring in marketing and was a member of the Corp of Cadets. On October 31, 1971, Rodney was married to Barbara Sue Poehl, the daughter of Henry J. and Elsie Poehl, in the Bethlehem Lutheran Church in William Penn, Texas. To this marriage was born two sons, Christopher Alan, April 27, 1972, and Nolan Boyd, October 7, 1977. In July, 1973, Rodney began a career as an inspector for the Texas Department of Agriculture in addition to ranching. Rodney is a deacon of Lone Oak Baptist Church and a member of Lee Scott Lodge No. 793 AF & AM. Chris and Nolan begin the sixth generation of Texas descendants of Johann Giesenschlag. — *Cecil Rodney Giesenschlag*

JOHANN GIESENSCHLAG

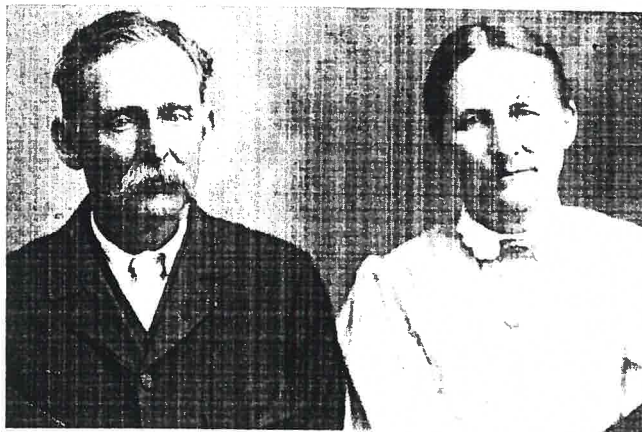
Johann Joachim Giesenschlag was born in 1817 in the village of Damelack, Prussia. There he married Anna Schulze, and they had four children; William, Dorothee (later called Dora), Christian, and August.

They migrated to the United States, arriving in Galveston in 1855. They first settled in Washington County, in the village of Berlin, but a few years later moved to Union Hill, near the present town of Burton. After their arrival in Texas, three more children were born: Adolph (1857), Rudolph (1860), and Louise (1864, known as Eda).

The Giesenschlag family arrived in Texas just in time for the Civil War, and the conflict divided the family, as it did many others. William, the oldest child, enrolled as a private in the Second Regiment, Texas Cavalry, of the Union Army and

was discharged at Brownsville in November, 1865. Many of the German settlers then in Texas did not favor slavery, and therefore, tended to support the Union, rather than the Confederate government. At the same time, Christian, the third child, was employed by F. Broesche of Washington County who ran a freighting business that carried cotton to Mexico for export, to circumvent the Union naval blockade Confederate ports.

In about 1876, Johann Giesenschlag moved his family to Burleson County and built his home on the rise that has been known as Giesenschlag Hill ever since. In 1877 he registered



Adolph & Caroline (Eberhardt) Giesenschlag about 1920.

the "G6" cattle brand, patterned after his six living children. August having died a teen-ager in Washington County. In 1879 he bought about 1100 acres of land between Mound Prairie and Old River, part of which he set aside for a family cemetery. Johann Giesenschlag died in 1880, and was the first person buried there. After his death, his land was divided among his children, all of whom continued to farm on the original land.

William, the eldest son, married Emily Broesche.

Dorothee, or "Dora," married Richard Wuenschler.

Christian married Mary Broesche. A story related by Chris's youngest daughter, Leona, holds that in the years immediately after the Civil War, he served in a Texas Ranger Company commanded by the legendary Capt. Leander H. McNelly. This has not been substantiated, but since it is known that Captain McNelly lived at Burton at the same time the Giesenschlags lived at nearby Union Hill, the story may well be true.

Adolph, the fifth child, married Caroline Eberhardt, and continued to live at the original family homestead on Giesenschlag Hill. He was the grandfather of the writer of this piece.

Rudolph married Molly Shelburne, who was for many years a schoolteacher in the county.

Louise, or "Eda," the youngest, married Lock L. Lewis.

All these families lived their entire lives in the Mound Prairie area and raised sizable families there, but each is a story of its own. — *W.H. Giesenschlag Jr.*

JOHN WILHELM GIESENSCHLAG

John Wilhelm Giesenschlag, born September 29, 1894, the son of Adolph and Caroline Eberhardt Giesenschlag, is a life-long resident of Burleson County living on what is commonly referred to as "Giesenschlag Hill." He is one of six sons and

THE BROESCHE FAMILY

Henry A. Broesche was born in Hanover, Germany on November 24, 1842, and at about the age of 4 years left Bremen with his family to come to America.

William Broesche, the father of Henry A., was born on December 7, 1810, and received a good education in his native tongue. He was the eldest of three brothers who with their families sailed from Bremen on August 16, 1846 on an American ship and arrived in Galveston on October 15, 1846. After a few days they went to Houston aboard a cotton boat and waited there for transportation to Washington County. John Hall's team of freight wagons brought them as far as Caney Creek near Buckhorn in Austin County. While there, Henry's youngest sister and his mother died of malaria and were buried at Buckhorn. The family finished their journey in December, with the widow Babbit, who owned the McCain League of land from which the three Broesche brothers bought 600 acres of land in the Burton community.

The Broesches were hard working and industrious people who made their homes out of the wilderness and conquered a large acreage of land to be cultivated. Each of the brothers, namely William, Henry, and Frederick built homes, sawing the lumber with an old "whip saw" and splitting the cedar shingles with a broadax. They endured many hardships in the early years, one of which was inadequate housing with several families living together in log cabins until more houses could be built.

William Broesche, the father of Henry A., was married to Frederica Wilkening and they had two children, Squire William C. Broesche and Henry A. Broesche. After the death of his first wife at Buckhorn, William married Caroline Homeyer on November 1, 1847. She had come over on the same ship with the Broesche family. The children of this second union were: Gustav of Burton; Minnie, wife of William Turner; Mary, who married Christian Giesenschlag of Burleson County; Annie, who married H. E. Smith of Lyons, Texas. William died on February 2, 1866 and his wife, Caroline died on January 1, 1913.

Henry A. Broesche, at the age of 20 years, served the Confederacy by hauling freight and supplies from Houston to San Antonio and on into Mexico. This was done by ox teams and huge wagons. They would hitch 4 or 5 yokes of oxen to such a wagon. Besides the bad weather, poor roads and the fording of rivers, they had to fear roving bands of Indians and robbers.

On March 28, 1867, Henry married Sophie Bremer and to this union was born one son, William, on April 14, 1868, who lived to attain the age of 17 years. Henry lost his wife on August 6, 1868. He then married Emily Fuchs on January 26, 1871, who was the eldest daughter of Lorenz and Friedericke (nee Kiel) Fuchs. The Broesche and Fuchs families knew each other in Germany and Friedericke served as a governess to the Broesche children when they came to America.

Henry and Emily, with their son, William, lived in a one-room house with a back room for a kitchen and a shed for a gallery, both having dirt floors. Water for drinking was carried from a spring and their clothes were washed in a creek and dried on bushes and small trees. In 1876 a new house was started by building one room, which later served as the kitchen. The entire foundation for all of the house was hewn with a broadax. The family lived in the one room until the house was completed.

Henry and Emily had six children. They were: Mary (Mrs. William Dallmeyer); Emma (Mrs. Otto Ehlert); Henry (married Ida Ehlert); Friedericke (died in 1918); Lillian (Mrs. A. H. Falkenberg); and Lorena (Mrs. William Boemer).

Henry Broesche served as Deputy County Tax Assessor for years in the Burton precinct. He and his wife helped organize and were charter members of the St. Paul Evangelical Lutheran Church of Rehburg, which was built in 1870. The Broesche family engaged in raising grain and cotton, but cattle raising constituted one of the important features of their work. Henry and Emily retired from work in 1918 and sold their farm of 100 acres to Robert and Martha Fuchs who are the present owners in 1974.

Emily died on May 6, 1925 and Henry lived until April 8, 1932, attaining the age of 89 years.