

The Sippe (Clan) Averbeck-Overbeck

By Alvin H. Overbeck

Updated by Thomas M. Overbeck and Anke Waldmann

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And in turn, here's Alvin's acknowledgments:

Special recognition and acknowledgement is given to the late **Wilhelm Averbeck** of Osnabruck, Germany. He was a lifelong teacher in the public schools of Osnabruck. As a hobby he compiled a family history of the branch of the family which remained in the vicinity of Osnabruck in Germany. A copy of this work was graciously lent to the author by **Dr. Gerhard Averbeck**, also of Osnabruck. This work saved the author tremendous research of public records in Germany. Mr. Wilhelm Averbeck compiled his material from memory, from the records in the two churches in Schledehausen (Catholic and Lutheran), and from a work by Heinrich Westerfeld. Westerfeld's work was a comprehensive study of the origins of the principal families in the Schledehausen area. Through many years of research of the records in public archives he discovered a wealth of material concerning the early origins of the families in and around Schledehausen. He developed their histories to the end of the 19th century. Mr. Averbeck brought his data to date until just prior to his death in the early 1950's. Westerfeld died in 1941. Additional data was discovered by the author in the archives of Lower Saxony (Niedersachsen) at Osnabruck.

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INTRODUCTION

"This country was settled by those who endured unimagined hardship to fulfill an ideal of a nation of free men and women. Lonely graves strewn across the continent, forgotten, for the most part, were filled by those who were pioneering through prairie, desert and mountain passes to make a homeland for their descendants. They dreamed of universal plenty, education and responsible citizenship. No hardship was too great, no self-denial too stern, if their children's children, down the ages, could become a nation of free and enlightened beings." - OPEN THE DOOR, Brandon (Reprinted by permission of C & R Anthony Inc., New York)

This book is respectfully dedicated to the memory of those pioneer forefathers of ours who answered the call of the New World, endured its privations in the wilderness, and made it possible for us living today to enjoy the fruits of their labor.

The Overbeck name has long been prominent as a defender of the Reformation and a strong supporter and proponent of the Protestant movement. The forebears knew the whiplash of religious persecution and this drove many of them to Western Germany as religious refugees in the 17th century. Whether motivated by a desire to escape religious persecution, a desire to avoid military service, or a desire for improved economic opportunity, it was inevitable that segments of the family be caught up in the waves of immigration which swept millions from Europe westward to people the vastness of the American wilderness. Each one who came contributed his part toward the development of this mighty nation. Perhaps few fully comprehended the full potential which lay before them and their descendants.

What impelled our dedicated forefathers to leave the known security of a well-established order and life to face the unknown dangers and privations of an uncertain world? Was it an ideal, something indefinable, a vision which inspired them to such great sacrifice? Was it mundane consideration as desire for wealth, desire to escape military service, an urge to be freed from an autocratic form of government in which the

individual was born into a mold from which he could never hope to escape? If each forefather who immigrated to the U.S. could have been asked the question "Just why did you leave your homeland and start out for America?", they might not been able to give us the exact reason. There were good reasons. There was the dread of military service, the desire to escape the dead end street created by industrialization which attracted the surplus population on the agricultural lands to leave the parental home and seek employment in the grist-mills of the new industrial revolution.

Be the reasons what they may, our forefathers were caught up in a mass migration from the Old World which created a New World. Between the years 1839 and 1844 nearly 80,000 newcomers a year entered the United States. This figure rose to 640,000 in the year 1882, but declined steadily to a 20-year low of 229,000 immigrants in the year 1898. A total of about 38 million came to the United States during the course of a single century.

Certain words in the German language recur in this work. For convenience, the following definitions are given:

Hof (or Bauernhof) - an estate consisting of the buildings and lands of an individual engaged in agriculture or farming. The main building consists usually of one large structure which houses the family in one end and the livestock in the other portion.

Heuerleute - the tenants of the Hof.

Vollerbe - A farm that was a Vollerbe had to pay the total charge while a Halberbe (half heritage) had to give less. There had been Drittelerbe (third part of a heritage) and Viertelerbe (fourth), too, even a Funftelerbe (fifth) was known in the area. A farm stayed a Vollerbe even if the farm got smaller. Sometimes half heritage farms were bigger than the neighboring full heritage but the farm could not change its status.

Anerbe - the male heir who alone has the right to inherit the title of the entire Hof. Another son may be declared Anerbe in case the original Anerbe dies without issue or is

incompetent to assume the title. Most of the time, but not always, the oldest son was designated Anerbe; the Averbeks established a different rule, passing the Hof to the youngest of the sons. The German government, where required, takes over control of an estate (Hof) in cases where the Anerbe is not able to manage his affairs properly. In such a case, the minor son who has been designated Anerbe may be assigned to a qualified farmer as an apprentice to learn proper farming methods. He receives possession of the Hof upon reaching his majority age.

Seventeen generations in the direct line of descent have been recorded to date in this family history. Attention is invited to the frequent recurrence of the same names in all branches of the family. Attention is also invited to the practice prevailing during centuries whereby many members of the family were known by a middle name.

CHAPTER 1 - ROOTS IN THE PAST

This is a story about ordinary people, the kind that make up the “salt of the earth”. Among the ranks of the family Overbeck-Averbeck will be found learned people - artists, doctors, lawyers, teachers, preachers, physicists - and many thousands of just plain, ordinary people who till the soil or labor in our industries. An intense desire for freedom of religion and political thought runs in the family from very early times. It has been said: “‘Duty’ might be the watchword for all who bear the name of Overbeck.” (*from “The Great Artists – Overbeck” by J. Beavington Atkinson*) The family has for generations been preeminent for learning and piety. Facility of pen runs in the family. The family became Protestant at the beginning of the Reformation and has remained intensely loyal to the newly embraced faith in spite of persecution. The forebears were leaders in promoting and fostering education for the young.

The family springs from the Averbeck Hof (Estate) in Hiddinghausen, near Schledehausen, in the present *gemeinde* (parish) of Bissendorf, located in the southwestern limits of Lower Saxony (Niedersachsen). This area lies between two hilly regions: the Teutoburger Wald (Teutoburg Forest) in the South and the Wiehengebirge (Wiehen Mountains) in the North. These two regions are separated by the Hase river and the Else river. Hiddinghausen and Grambergen are North of these rivers and therefore it lies at the foothills of the Wiehengebirge. It has taken the name “Waldmark” (Forest Mark) from the forested mountains which surround the valley from the Essen Mountains in the north to Eimken-Ameisen in the east, and extends as far as Schledehausen, comprising the most substantial portion of the parish Bissendorf. The area was selected and utilized in ancient times as a burial site by a race which lived here between 3000-2000 B.C. as indicated by the gigantic granite burial markers near Deitinghausen. The Hof lies astride the Hiddinghaeuser Bach (stream), which winds its way peacefully through the succulent green meadows.

From the earliest records the name was “Averbeck”. The word “aver” is a Saxon Low German word for “across” while the second part of the word “beck” is the Saxon word for “stream” (also known as “becke” or “bieke” in the old Saxon Low German), which has

become “bach” in modern German. It is assumed that the portion of the name “beck” referred to and derived its name from the position of the Hiddinghaeuser Bach which still flows through the Hof. The first part of the name has undergone a change throughout the years. It is believed that the first site of the Hof was somewhere to the right of the Hiddinghaeuser Bach, across (*aver*) the stream from where others were then living. All of the names in the area emerged during the twelfth century when names were adopted in accordance with the location of the Hof. Thus, names like Waldmann (forester), Westerfeld (west field), and Vordemberge (foothills), which names are self-explanatory, arose.

History does not record for us when the name began to be changed from Averbeck to Overbeck, but it is believed that the change occurred prior to the fifteenth or sixteenth centuries. Both variants appear in the records from about 1400. The occasion for the change may have been the need to relocate the building site to higher ground and nearer neighbors who had built homes after the establishment of the original Hof. The land to the right of the stream is rather low and swampy, not at all ideal for a building site. To the neighbors, this site would have been “across the stream.” With the Hof relocated to higher ground, just above the stream, it was natural that the name be changed to “Overbeck”. The word “over” is a Saxon word not presently found in the German language.

The family name appears in various parts of the world with a number of variations. Such names as Averbecke, Averbeck, Averbieke, Averbiek, Overbeek, or Overbeeke, are to be found in many genealogical references. Due to the fact that the eldest son usually inherited the estate, it was necessary for the younger members of the family to seek their fortunes elsewhere. From early times, these names appear in Holland, England and other parts of Germany. It is logical to assume that all of these names had their origin in the Hof in Hiddinghausen. The church records in the Lutheran Church at Schledhausen list all of the members of the family at Hiddinghausen as already known by the name Overbeck, with a notation in some cases “Sive Averbeck” (*also known as Averbeck*), from about 1800 onward. Members of the family who left the Hof are invariably known by the name Overbeck. The records of the Lutheran Church in

Schledehausen begin with the year 1803. The records in the archives of Lower Saxony also show both variants in general use before this time. (See reference to “Overbecken Hus” in the records for the 15th century given in Chapter 2.)

The family is of pure Teutonic stock. The Teutons were a Germanic tribe of Scandinavian origin (initially from Jutland in present-day Denmark) who left their homes in Schleswig-Holstein around 120 B.C., and migrated in a southerly and southwesterly direction. When they arrived in the area now known as France, they clashed with the Romans who were then occupying Gaul (France). The Romans defeated the Teutons in battle, and those Teutons who remained alive settled where they were. Many of them settled in the foothills of the Teutoberg Mountains. Here they remained and were isolated from the rest of the world around them for many centuries. They became a part of Lower Saxony and developed a Saxon dialect. The basic unit was the family and sons and daughters remained with the family until they married. Even after marriage they maintained close bonds with the family and carried on its traditions. Families made up a clan (or *sippe*), and the clans made up the State of Saxony.

The different plots of fields and the homestead formed the “Hufe”, from which the term “Hof” undoubtedly arose. Members of the same family remained close to the Hof as long as it was possible to support all of them. Faithfulness to the marriage partner was so strong among these people that the Romans wrote “A number of women committed suicide rather than fall into the hands of the soldiers who had vanquished their husbands and brothers.” Private ownership of land developed some centuries after the clans had settled down following the period of wars and migrations.

Our early forbears lived in comparative peace in the valleys at the foothills of the Teutoberg Mountains, worshipping their Saxon gods and carrying on their simple life. Charlemagne decided to conquer the Saxons in order to force Christianity upon them. He carried on a series of wars with them between 772 and 804. Thousands of Saxons were slaughtered at Verden on the River Aller in 782. Catholicism was forced upon the “heathen” Saxons immediately afterward.

History informs us that the Duke Wittekind made a stand against Charlemagne in Osnabruck in 783, that he was defeated and captured, and that he was taken to France where he was baptized a Christian in 785. Osnabruck is the provincial capital of the area in which Schledehausen and Hiddinghausen are located. There is no record of a family name "Averbeck" as of that time, but the possibility must not be ruled out that the Hof existed under a more archaic name as "Ueoewerbieke" or "Oawerbieke". It is not known whether or not our forebears served under Wittekind, but in view of the fact that Wittekind had a very large loyal following among the Saxons it can be presumed that some of them would have served in his forces if the family were then already in existence. Westerfeld, who is an authority on the history of the area in and around Schledehausen, stated his opinion as follows: "In all probability the Vollerbe (estate with full heritage and full taxpaying duties) Averbeck originated in the decades immediately following the period in which the Franks in the most bloody manner forced Christianity upon our fathers who had clung so tenaciously to their old way of life." It can be assumed that the Hof was founded at least around the year 800, if not before. It is significant that in later years this Hof was one of three in the vicinity of Schledehausen which were never subjected to serfdom. The Hof remained free. "Free men of free estate" has long been the motto of the Sippe Averbeck.

The bishopric of Osnabruck is probably the oldest in all of Saxony, established no later than 787. From here the missionaries branched out to the surrounding area. Schledehausen is about 12 miles from Osnabruck, hence it is logical to assume that it was one of the early areas to be brought into the Christian fold. The church at Schledehausen, St. Laurentius, was one of the oldest Christian churches in the Osnabruck area. It was elevated to the status of "Kaplanei" in 1243, being one of only four churches in the Osnabruck bishopric to receive such an honor. This honor bestowed upon the church at Schledehausen the status of "Haupt-kirche" or Principal Church, which gave it the privilege to have a representative of the Cathedral in Osnabruck constantly in attendance. The inhabitants of Hiddinghausen attended church services in Schledehausen. It is at this time (about 1200) that the first reference to the Hof Averbeck comes up. It is listed in the "Lehnbuchern" books listing estates from which the bishopric collected financial support) of the Bishopric of Osnabruck as "Domus in

Hiddinghausen” (House in Hiddinghausen). A reference which lists the goods which were to be delivered to the monastery at Iburg for the second half of the 14th century (1340-1400) states that the “Erbe Overbeck” was required to deliver 4 sheaves (of grain) to the monastery (presumably annually). These are the only glimpses which we have into the early history and status of the family. Thus, the first 400 years of time in which we might expect the family to be in existence are shrouded in darkness. Another 100 years must pass before any more references are preserved to us.

CHAPTER 2 - THE FAMILY EMERGES

The dense forests along the banks of the Hiddinghaeuser Bach provided an excellent abode for our forebears. The meadows, fields and grazing areas offered ideal inducements for agricultural pursuits. Churches sprang up, cloisters were built, and castles for noblemen appeared on the scene. To these were given, as a fief or fee, the various properties and estates in the area. According to Hoffmeyer's "Geschichte der Stadt und des Regierungsbezirks Osnabrueck", in the year 1400, of the 3000 Hoefe (estates) in the Osnabruck area half belonged to the Church and the other half to the nobles and knights. During the period 1442-1450 - ascertained by Westerfeld from the Archives of Lower Saxony in Osnabruck - Johann Schele of Schelenburg (Schelen Castle) held as fief the "Overbecken Hus to Hiddinghusen" (the Overbeck house in Hiddinghausen). The feudal lord Schele in all probability belonged to the class of professional ministerial or public servants, later reckoned among the knights, and who emerged as Baron Schele. He was awarded many "hoefe" as fiefs.

The fiefs organized themselves into a protective association. The spokesman for the association was a Herr Meyer of Schledehausen, who represented the interests of his fellow members in a forceful manner, especially to Schelenburg. The Association of Schledehausen, which extended beyond the boundaries of Schledehausen Parish into the present-day district of Melle, consisted of 16 Vollerbenhoefe (estates with the right of full inheritance of the entire estate to the oldest son) which Westerfeld names in his work. Of these, the occupants of only 3 Hoefe (estates) were exempt from the bonds of serfdom - Meyer in Schledehausen, Averbek in Hiddinghausen and Luehrmann of Astrup. The children born on these three estates as individuals of free estate knew neither the necessity of "Freikauf" (purchase of freedom) nor that of "Zwangdienst" (compulsory service, military or otherwise). These occupants were not serfs, but subjects, and as such were required to deliver to the feudal lord only money, cattle or natural products of the soil.

Records of such deliveries are on file in the Archives of Lower Saxony beginning with the year 1512. Some of these references give us a glimpse into the life of that time. An

entry in 1589 reveals that “Averbecke Burshup Grambergen” is exempt from the payment of taxes because his “house and goods were destroyed by fire.” It is possible that this occasion prompted the relocation of the building site to its present location, if the change had not already been made. It is not known for certain whether the use of the two variants Averbeck-Overbeck arose out of the fact of the physical relocation of the homestead or derived from variant pronunciations of the Low German as spoken in this area.

The first direct reference by name to the occupants of the Hof is that of 1601 in the files of the Archives of Lower Saxony, which names [Frantz Averbecke](#) and his wife, Trina (Katherine) and their three children. The following appears in the records for the year 1601:

Father (Pater) Frantz Averbecke pays 3 Taler
Mother (Uxor) Trine Averbecks pays 1 1/2 Taler
Son (Filius) Johann Averbecke pays 12 Schillings
Son (Filius) Frantz Averbecke pays 12 Schillings
Daughter (Filia) Annen Averbecke pays 6 Schillings
Servant Brune pays 9 Schillings

Another reference lists an individual, Ertwin Averbeck, as a “Domvicar” in the Cathedral in Osnabruck in 1626. A Domvicar was a minor functionary in the Cathedral. In 1634, during the time of the Thirty Years’ War, Averbeck is again released from his obligation for the delivery of goods because he “nichte gesaeyet hat” (has not sown) and “ihm vor wenig Tagen seine Pferde genohmen” (his horses were taken away from him several days ago). However, also the other livestock underwent significant reduction in numbers during the prevailing period of war. There were listed in 1566 “bei Overbecke Buirschup Grambergen” (Note: Hiddinghausen was a subdivision of the district of Grambergen) 6 horses, 5 cows and oxen, 3 steers and 10 hogs as inventory for the Hof, but in 1654 (some 90 years later and immediately after the end of the Thirty Years’ War) only 1 horse, 2 cows, 3 steers, 1 foal and 24 sheep were listed. Concerning the buildings on the Hof, besides the dwelling, there were mentioned the following: 1 toilet, 1 dwelling for the

retired parents of the heir, and 1 lime-house. As developed by Westerfeld, listed also in the Archives were the “favours” which were imposed on the Overbeck lands for the lord of the manor and the Catholic priest in Schledehausen, obligations which were not abrogated until 1864.

The next reference occurs in 1623 when [Frans Averbeck](#) is mentioned, and in 1630 when a reference is made to [Wessel Averbeck](#), son of Frans. References in 1628 and 1630 indicate that “Wessel Averbecke” was then residing on the Hof with his brother, his sister and his father (retired). Another reference in 1634 designates Wessel as a “Heiles Erbe” or “Vollerbe”. (See below for the discussion of a reference in 1659.) With a final reference in 1693 (listing the individuals living at that time) the records in the Archives of Lower Saxony end. From this time onward, the only records available are the church records of the two confessions in Schledehausen, the Roman Catholic and the Evangelical (Lutheran). These records at first contain only names and dates of birth (or baptism) and death. Only from the generation of [Bals Adam Averbeck](#) do we obtain information concerning other factors of the family circumstances. For instance, in the three generations following Bals Adam Averbeck approximately 30% of all the children born died in infancy. Causes of death are most frequently given as “Ruhr Sickness”, tuberculosis, pestilence, smallpox, nerve fever, typhoid, apoplexy, and various types of fever.

The Thirty Years’ War occurred during the years 1618 to 1648. During the sixteenth century the Protestant Reformation swept Germany and the northern parts of Germany became solidly Protestant. When Duke George of Saxony, a Catholic, died in 1539, he was succeeded by his Protestant brother, Henry. When Saxony joined the ranks of the Lutherans, more than half of Germany became Lutheran. Charles V led the religious wars for the Pope and during this period Saxony changed rulers several times, wavering between Catholic and Protestant. The Diet of Augsburg laid down that the Lutheran principalities and free cities should be free to choose between the Catholic and Lutheran faiths, but the rulers had the right to impose the religion of their choice upon their subjects. Those people who professed a religion of a different faith than their rulers were permitted to relocate with their belongings to other territories.

The end of the Thirty Years' War found the Lutherans in Schledehausen "zu kurz gekommen", or in other words "on the short end of the stick." In spite of the fact that in 1650 (two years after the end of the war) there were only 29 adult Catholic residents and about 3,000 Lutherans in Schledehausen, the church edifice was given to the Catholic faith, in compliance with the terms of the Diet of Augsburg. All ecclesiastical acts for the Lutherans (marriage, baptism, burial) were required to be performed by the Catholic priest in Schledehausen, even though he had only 29 adult members in his own parish. In 1724, Ludwig Clamor von Schele granted to the Lutherans in and around Schledehausen the use of his private chapel in Schelenburg, and it was not until 1803 that the Catholics granted to the Lutherans the right to use their church edifice to conduct Lutheran services. In the meantime, they had met for religious services wherever space was afforded. In 1898, the Catholics approached the Lutherans with an offer to surrender the church edifice upon payment of a sum of 52,000 marks, which was promptly raised. (This edifice still stands unchanged except for a new steeple which was damaged in World War II. An Allied pilot passing over the area dropped a bomb which struck the steeple, destroying only the steeple and the organ. The organ wasn't rebuilt until 1964.) The Catholics then built another church building, almost identical to the older building, about a block away. Out of this situation arose the fact that all records of ecclesiastical acts are recorded in the records of the Catholic Church until 1823 at which time the Lutherans were granted the right to perform their own acts. Due to the intense religious feeling prevailing in the Scheledehausen area in the 1960's, the records of the Catholic church were not made available at all to Mr. Averbeck of Osnabruck, and were obtained by Alvin on only one occasion under great difficulty and with considerable harassment.

After the time of the Thirty Years' War, the family of Wessel Averbeck changed considerably. The last reference found in the Archives of Lower Saxony concerning the family is one dated 1659, a Register of the Parish of Schledehausen, which states as follows: "Wessell Averbecke, wife Catharina, 3 children, 2 sons the oldest Adam 20 years, Berndt 18 years, 1 daughter Alheidt 17 years, Anneke Bardneck Backhaus - a girl - maid from (not distinguishable) and another Anneke, 10 years, whose mother is named Anneke Badts." From the church records it was found that [Anna Averbeck](#), presumably

the daughter of Wessel Averbeck, married a [Gisbert Sudhoff](#) in 1660 who took the name Averbeck. A later reference dated 1664 shows that he was then 40 years old, hence born in 1624. Nothing is known about his origin. This constitutes the only break in the direct male line of descent of the family (until the early 21st century), although the blood line was preserved through Anna Averbeck. Other records mention of another daughter, [Sybille Averbeck](#), presumably born before Anna. However, no other information has been found about her.

It is presumed that Wessel was still under 20 years of age at the time of the reference in 1634 and that he married about 1638, since his oldest son was shown to be 20 years of age in the reference in 1659. Sometime around 1662 (after the birth of [Johann Averbeck](#)) Anna Averbeck married Gisbert Sudhoff and took over the Hof, indicating that Wessel died rather suddenly, at an age less than fifty. After the death of his sister, Anna, Gisbert Averbeck married the widow Waldmann in Grambergen ([Catharina Meinberg](#), born about 1631, died May 20, 1693, married Gisbert Oct. 14, 1669). Gisbert and Catharina had three sons (Hermann, born Jun. 8, 1670, died Nov. 19, 1728, Johann Henrich, born Aug. 10, 1671, and Johann Gisbert, born Jul. 16, 1674). Anna and Gisbert Averbeck had at least eight children: Johann Gisbert, born Dec. 4th 1661, Anna Margaretha, born Feb. 8th 1663, another Anna Margaretha born Dec. 2, 1663, Engel born Feb. 7, 1666, Henrich born Feb. 13, 1667, Gisbert, born Mar. 23, 1670, Hermann, born Jan. 8, 1673 and Alheit, born Jan. 5, 1676.

The next owner of the Averbeck Hof is the oldest son [Johann Gisbert Averbeck](#) - so the youngest-son-inheritance rule was broken again. Johann Gisbert married [Anna Engel Dormann](#) Nov. 25, 1694 (Anna Engel was born Feb. 26, 1662 in Hiddinghausen). No death dates have been found for his parents, but a strong possibility is that they died before he married. At that point the youngest brother may have been too young to inherit the Hof.

Johann Gisbert and Anna Engel Averbeck had three children: [Joes Hermann](#) (born about 1696), [Anna Angela](#) (born Feb. 2, 1698) and [Balthasar Caspar](#) (born Aug. 27, 1702). Again they broke the rule but this time they had a good reason: Balthasar Caspar

married [Anna Margaretha Duling](#) from the parish of Belm. Anna inherited the farm of her parents after her brothers died young. Balthasar Caspar became the owner of Anna's farm (and took the Duling name), so his parental estate was free for his brother.

Joes Hermann Averbeck married [Katharina Elsabein Doermann](#) Nov. 4, 1732. They had five children: [Johann Hermann](#), born Feb. 2, 1734; [Anna Katharina](#), born Feb. 26, 1735; [Balthasar Adam](#), born Jun. 29, 1738; [Johann Henrich](#), born Mar. 25, 1741; and [Adam Gisbert](#), born Jan. 19, 1744.

Records show that Joes Hermann was fined 2 Talers early in 1753 for having the private Lutheran teacher of the Lutheran children sing a Lutheran hymn at the gravesite of his child, and for having refused to pay to the Catholic parish schoolmaster the established burial fee. We must admire the spirit of this forefather with the courage to defy the authorities who were imposing religious intolerance on a hapless group.

As pointed out above, before the law the entire community of Schleddehausen was considered to be Catholic until 1803. All entries of ecclesiastical acts applying to the predominantly Lutheran community could be entered only in the Catholic records for a period of 150 years. At the burial of Lutheran citizens the Lutheran schoolmaster was permitted to accompany the children and the body only to the walls of the Catholic church at which point the Catholic priest took over the instruction of the children and conducted the burial. (Note: In Germany in the performance of ecclesiastical acts, the priest or pastor conducts religious instruction as part of the act.) It is understandable that in this intolerable situation many unpleasanties were endured by our forefathers. This situation prevailed until an agreement was reached in 1803 for the joint use by both the Lutherans and the Catholics of the until that time only church building in Schleddehausen.

Although the above cited occurrence indicates that Joes Hermann Averbeck was a courageous defender of the Lutheran Church, he was also a friend and proponent of schools. Another writer has written: "As during the fifties of the eighteenth century a measure of security was guaranteed the Lutherans of the Schleddehausen Parish, the inhabitants of the Waldmark resolved to equip a school at a site in Astrup more

favorably situated than the small neighboring school in Grambergen.” For the construction of this school Joes Hermann Averbeck applied himself energetically and entered into discussion of the proposal with a Moenkenhaus of Astrup.

Adam Gisbert was later known as Johann Adam. He became the manager of the “Feldmuhle” and therefore couldn't be the heir of the Averbeck farm. He was first married to [Clara Margarethe Schnitker](#) (married Oct. 16, 1776). His second wife was [Anna Maria Hellm](#) (married Jun. 27, 1780).

The fate of Johann Henrich is unsure, but the next owner of the farm was Bals (Balthasar) Adam Overbeck. He was baptized on June 29, 1738, hence can be presumed to have been born shortly prior to this date. He married [Anna Amalia Waldkoetter](#) of Grambergen in 1762. Very little more is told us about Bals Averbeck, except a notation that at his death only one goat remained alive on the Hof. It is significant that he died at the age of 45 in 1783, together with his wife and daughter all within six days of each other. Apparently a pestilence took its grim toll.

Bals and Anna's oldest son [Gerhard Heinrich](#) was just 19 years old at the time. The youngest, [Hermann Heinrich](#), was born in 1777 and was only six years old. He could not become the owner in 1783, and therefore the inheritance right of the youngest was broken again.

Five of Balthasar's eight children married into neighboring families at Hiddinghausen, Grambergen and Astrup. Descendants of these became, in many cases, “heuerlings” or “Hollandgangers”. This occupation will be discussed in the next chapter. References in the records show a Johann Adam Averbeck-Overbeck having entered the estate of matrimony with three different women. The record is not clear due to the fact that only the records of the Lutheran church could be examined. In any event, these branches of the family tend to disappear from the records at Schledehausen, leaving mainly the records of Gerhard Heinrich Overbeck's descendants.

CHAPTER 3 - THE FAMILY IN GERMANY

The continued presence of all members of the families in the valley of the Waldmark gradually absorbed all of the available land. At the birth of the Industrial Revolution, by which time the surplus population of the land began to be drained off to fill places in the newly developing factories, another vocation was adopted by many of these surplus member of the "Hoefe". This was the occupation of "Heuerling", and these people were called "Hollandganger". Essentially their job was hay-making during the summer months in areas where labor was scarce. It was necessary for these people to earn as much money as possible during the summer to provide them with a sustenance during the long winter months.

The German "Hollandganger" people came mostly from the provinces of Oldenburg and Hanover. They came from "Hoefe" whose land holdings were too small to provide adequate subsistence for the growing families. The men left their homes each spring in haying time and went afoot to Holland and the Lowlands to cut and put up hay for farmers there. Holland was particularly desired because of the favorable prices prevailing for the purchase of sewing machines and other manufactured objects which were then in demand in Germany.

Hollandganger usually came in groups of five or six. They were of powerful physique. Their day usually began at about 4:00 a.m. when they arose and were served coffee. They then went into the fields until about 7:30 a.m., when they were served a breakfast of black bread or pancakes with copious quantities of fat pork and buttermilk. Work was then resumed until about 11:00 a.m., when coffee was again served. Work continued until about 12:00 noon when a very heavy meal with lots of fat pork was served, followed which they slept for a few hours. After another cup of coffee they returned to the fields until about 7:30 p.m. when a heavy evening meal with substantial quantities of fat pork and cheese was served. Work was then resumed until about 9:00 or 9:30 p.m., followed by another cup of coffee and then to bed. They slept in the fields, in huts, or tents provided for them.

At the end of the season, usually about September, they returned to their homes on foot, many of them taking home items such as sewing machines, a cow, or other items which were needed at home. In those families which had children, the wife and children stayed behind in Germany to till the small family plot of land. Some women, who had no children, accompanied their husbands and were employed as domestics in the homes of the farmers where their men were working as Heuerleute. They made cheese and performed the usual chores usually done by the women of the lowlands. The Hollandganger usually arrived in the lowlands fat after the winter's inactivity, but left lean and muscular. All work was performed by hand, the cutting of the hay was done with hand scythes, and the hay stacked by hand.

The records show that a number of those who emigrated to the United States were Heuerleute or Hollandganger. On one visit to the Deitinghausen area, Alvin located distant relatives of Maria Engel Bettinghaus, who were then living in retirement in the "Heuerlinghaus" (*the house of the haymakers*).

[Gerhard Heinrich Averbeck](#) was baptized Dec. 21, 1764. He was only 18 years of age in 1783 when he was required to assume the responsibilities of his position as Anerbe following the untimely death of his parents (Bals and Anna). In 1791, at the age of 26, he married [Anna Katharina Angela Plogstert](#) from the neighboring Hof. To this union were born eight children, four of which died in infancy. The family line which still occupies the Hof is descended from his fifth child and third son, [Christoph Heinrich Averbeck](#). The first three children died in infancy while the Anerbe, [Johann Friedrich Averbeck](#), died a young man without leaving any issue. After 19 years of marriage Gerhard Heinrich Averbeck's wife died leaving him with five small children, one of which died the following year.

At the age of 46, he married [Maria Engel Bettinghaus](#) from Deitinghausen. To this union six children were born and all of these emigrated to the United States to found the family branches residing there. Gerhard Heinrich Averbeck died in 1834 at the age of 69 years. His wife followed him into death six years later. Following her death each of the

six children, in turn, some of them married and some of them single, made their way to the New World.

At the age of 62, in the year 1827, Gerhard decided to rebuild the ancestral home. The house was full and in need of extensive repairs. The question arises whether the old homestead then stood on its present site or whether the present location was selected in 1827. No positive answer is forthcoming. It is illogical to assume that the homestead had remained across the Hiddinghaeuser Bach for 1,000 years (from 800 to 1827, with one destruction by fire in 1589).

The house consisted of the typical house-barn combination characteristic of Germany, with the square “Fachwerk” exterior shown in the frontispiece, and with a thatched roof. In the large entranceway he had inscribed the names “Gerhard Heinrich Averbeck” and “Anna Maria Angela Bettinghaus” with the following inscription: “Erbaut Anno 1827. Kemper. Das vorige Haus ist vor Aller vergangen, wir thun, O Gott von Dir verlangen, dass dieses Haus moeg solange stehn, bis es vor Alter thut wieder vergehn.”

(Translation: “Built in the year 1827 by the master carpenter Kemper. The previous house disintegrated due to old age; we ask of thee, O God, that this house might stand until it also disintegrates from old age.”) The letters had been carved into the beam above the door and embellished with white paint and ornate carving. For seven years, Gerhard lived to enjoy the new home.

This structure stood until it was destroyed by fire on Jan. 25, 1947. It was reconstructed along the same lines as the original structure. Within the house are to be found (and still being utilized) pieces of furniture brought to the Hof by the first wife of Gerhard Averbeck. They consist of clothes chests, linen chests and china closets. They are of dark wood, hand carved, and bear the following in carved letters: “Katharina Angela Plogstert, 1791.” These pieces were saved during the fire of 1947.

Mr. William Averbeck was born on the Hof and has given in his work a detailed description of the accoutrements and arrangement of the house. The living quarters are spacious, in keeping with the customary farm house of Germany. The table at which the family dined is handmade of oak. It is not known how many centuries of use it has seen.

Chairs were not used, but the family sat on benches at the table, with the hired help along one side and his children along the other. The senior hired man sat at one end and it was his duty to cut the home-baked black bread, some loaves of which weighed as much as 20-30 pounds.

[Christoph Heinrich Averbeck](#) inherited the Hof after the death of his father. He married [Maria Elisabeth Meinberg](#) in 1829. She came from a family in Old Schleddehausen whose Hof was still in fief to the Baron Schele. It was necessary for her to obtain a “Writ of Freedom” from the Baron in order to marry. Maria died in 1858 of nerve fever at the age of 52, while Christoph died one month later at the age of 58. They were followed by their son, [Hermann Heinrich Wilhelm Averbeck](#), who died of tuberculosis the following year.

Of the remaining three children, two emigrated to the United States in 1860. Nothing was heard of [Maria Engel Averbeck](#) after she left for the New World. [Johann Friedrich Averbeck](#) proceeded to Ohio and married there. The family in Germany took note of the fact that he married a “genuine” American, and not a German girl as would normally be expected. He returned to the Hof in 1884-1885 for a lengthy visit. He had at that time two sons, approximately 14-16 years of age as evidenced by a photograph which he left behind. Shortly after his return to the United States a letter announcing his death was received and from that time on there was no further contact with his descendants.

[Gerhard Heinrich Averbeck](#) was the only child of his family who remained. He married [Marie Elisabeth Enneker](#) from Nordhausen bei Osterkappeln in 1860. One son, the Anerbe, was born to this union. When the son was only 18 months old, the mother was suddenly taken through a stroke, after only five years of marriage. This was the first time in more than 200 years that an heir of the Hof had selected a bride outside the circle of families residing in Grambergen. It can be seen from the records that intermarriage among the families of Grambergen had been going on without exception since 1600 (the only exception being the entry of Gisbert Sudhoff in 1660) and this fact had caused concern among some members of the family.

Gerhard Heinrich Averbeck broke this chain a second time when he proceeded to Exterheide bei Langerich and selected his second bride from the large Hof of

Stapenhorst. He married [Katharine Luise Sophie Krenning](#), baptized Stapenhorst, in 1867. To this union seven children were born, of which three children died in infancy of the dreaded "Ruhr" sickness which spread over Germany after the Franco-German War. The mother was not able to overcome her grief over the loss of the three children, and passed away in 1890 at the age of 48. As soon as his oldest son married, Gerhard Heinrich Averbeck retired from his Hof to spend his last years with his daughter, [Marie Kronsbein](#) in Melle, where he died in 1899.

[Adam Heinrich Gerhard Averbeck](#) served in the German Army sometime after 1885 and married [Marie Elise Waldmann](#) in 1891 shortly after his release from the army. To this union three children were born. The oldest died suddenly at the age of five. The mother was unable to bear her grief, and followed him into death the next year. Of the other two sons, [Heinrich Wilhelm \(Willi\) Averbeck](#) was afflicted with epilepsy and died without issue in 1953, while the youngest son [Fritz Wilhelm Averbeck](#) became suddenly ill at the age of 25 and was committed to an institution in Osnabruck. During the Nazi regime word was received that Fritz had died in Wunstorf and due to the fact that no information had ever been received about his transfer from Osnabruck to Wunstorf it is suspected that his death occurred under questionable circumstances.

Heinrich Averbeck remarried in 1899, this time [Marie Luise Bullerdieck](#). To this union four children were born, two sons and two daughters. One daughter died in infancy. The youngest son, [Heinrich Friedrich Gustav Averbeck](#), had been selected to become the Anerbe, but he was reported missing on the Russian front in 1942 and is presumed to be dead. [Heinrich Rudolf Averbeck](#) was therefore made the Anerbe. Heinrich enlarged the Averbeck lands by purchasing the Plogstert Hof nearby. There had been no male heir to this Hof for some years, and the heirs finally consented to the sale of these lands to the Averbeck Hof. Heinrich carried the Hof through the two World Wars with their aftermaths. Heinrich died at the age of 77 shortly after receiving the news of his son Gustav's death on the Russian front. His wife died in 1946 at the age of 70. Rudolf's son, [Gerd Heinrich Averbeck](#), had no male heir, so ownership of the Hof passed to the youngest of his three daughters, [Cora Averbeck](#). Her husband Michael Lilier has adopted the Averbeck surname, so the Hof will stay in the Averbeck name.

Much could be written concerning the history of this branch of the Sippe Aeverbeck-Overbeck. Suffice it to say that the history indicates a line of people with the courage to stand up for their ideas of personal freedom, a people steeled to self-sufficiency under the press of religious intolerance and persecution, and a self-consciousness of a mission to be performed.

CHAPTER 4 - MIGRATION TO THE NEW WORLD

Conditions for Carrying Passengers from Harburg to the United States in North America.

- 1. We use good ships with tween decks.*
- 2. Passengers will receive during the crossing, insofar as is the custom on board ship, food consisting of salt beef and pork, peas, beans, gruel, rice, wheat flour products, sauerkraut, potatoes, plums, butter, etc., all in sufficient quantity and good. In addition, morning and evening, coffee or tea, ship's bread and drinking water, etc. In case of sickness, appropriate food will be furnished.*
- 3. The usual baggage will be transported free of charge, 20 cubic feet per person.*
- 4. Beds will be furnished in tween decks. Straw ticks or bedding will be provided by the passengers. Also, silverware, etc.*
- 5. Passage for persons over 8 years old, usually to New York, 30-40 Prussian dollars; under 8, 6 Prussian dollars and cheaper. Babies still on breast feeding free. Passage is furnished pending availability of ships. The cost may rise or fall, depending on conditions.*
- 6. A birth certificate for every child under 8 is required.*

Thus reads a brochure which offers transportation to the New World (source: Archives of Lower Saxony). The German Government required a report from the emigrants upon their arrival in New York (or a U.S. port) concerning the conditions found aboard ship as well as the conditions at point of arrival. Other references indicate that a Western Settlement Society of Cincinnati, Ohio, arranged to settle newly arrived immigrants.

It has been pointed out that all of the children of [Gerhard Heinrich Averbeck](#) by his second marriage emigrated to the New World. The first member to do so, of which we have positive record, was [Johann Heinrich "Henry" Overbeck](#), who left Germany in 1839 and settled at Holland, Indiana. The next one to leave was [Balthasar Heinrich Overbeck](#), who left Germany in 1840 and came to Guttenberg, Iowa. It is not known whether or not [Hermann Heinrich Overbeck](#) accompanied his brother Balthasar in 1840, his brother

Johann Heinrich in 1839, or came alone. Restored marriage records of Hamilton County (Cincinnati), Ohio show a Heinrich Overbeck marrying a Catharin Gruarbmann in April of 1837, so it may have been around that time. The [wife of Johann Heinrich Overbeck](#) also came over in 1840, but it is not known whether or not she traveled with Balthasar. [Johann Wilhelm Overbeck](#) came over in 1849, [Johann Adam Overbeck](#) in 1852, and [Marie Engel Overbeck](#) in 1853, being the last member of the family to emigrate. Johann Wilhelm, Johann Adam and Marie Engel all settled in Clayton County, Iowa. Contact was maintained between the Iowa branches of the family with the branch in Holland, Indiana through correspondence and visits for a number of years. [Christoph Overbeck](#) and [Mr. & Mrs. Henry Brandt](#) once visited in Holland, and on another occasion [Mrs. Amelia Berg](#) and her sister [Caroline Overbeck](#) visited there. It is known that [George Overbeck](#), his wife and son, [John Frank Overbeck](#), and [Henry Overbeck](#), all from Holland, Indiana, once visited the Iowa families in Clayton County.

[Hermann Heinrich Overbeck](#) was among the early members of the family to come to the New World. He settled in Cincinnati, Ohio, where he died in 1849 at the age of 36 years, after marrying [Catharin Gruarbmann](#) in 1837. Further hampering research of this part of the family was the fact that almost all of the public records of Cincinnati were destroyed by fire in 1884. The only information that had been available concerning this family is a notation in the family history of [Johann Heinrich Overbeck](#) that a daughter of Hermann Heinrich Overbeck, [Elisabeth Wildey](#), visited her uncle on one occasion. In view of the fact that Johann Heinrich passed away in 1900, the visit must have taken place prior to that date. It is unlikely that Hermann Heinrich left other children. The city of Cincinnati abounds with the name Overbeck, but a check of the available records revealed only that most of those residing there during the period 1840-1860 came from Hanover, Germany. Some may be connected with [Johann Friedrich Overbeck](#), who came to America in 1860, but his destination was Toledo, Ohio. Since the surplus members of the Hof had been leaving the Waldmark over many centuries, these would then be "offshoots" of the family tree. This matter will be discussed further in Chapter 5.

Johann Adam Overbeck: *“The trip from their home to the sea port, Bremen, took them all one day. That night they slept on beds of straw in an old barn. The next morning they left Bremen in a sailboat for America. Six weeks and three days later they landed at Baltimore, Maryland. From here they went through a tunnel to a river where they got onto a flatboat, pulled by one horse with the help of men.*

When they reached Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, a one-year-old brother died. He was buried at the foot of the Allegheny mountains where a number of others who had died of cholera were being buried. Plain wooden boxes were made to put the bodies in before burial.

They then took a boat down the Ohio River to Cincinnati, Ohio, where they stayed two weeks. Their journey was then continued down the Ohio to Indiana, where they were to make their way into the interior to Holland, Indiana, the home of his uncle. (Uncle is [Johann Heinrich Overbeck](#), uncle of [Christoph Overbeck](#).) This settlement was thirty miles from the river and the distance had to be covered on foot, with only marked trees to guide their route. After arriving in Holland, they took quarters in an old shack. Here they just barely existed for several months as they had no butter, milk or flour and lived on a menu of corn bread for months. Then a kind friend, Mr. Henke, invited them in to live with him the rest of the winter. In the spring they started for Iowa. They drove a team of oxen the thirty miles to Evansville, Indiana, but did not have enough money to stay at a hotel and Mr. Overbeck (Christoph then 8 years old) was put to bed on a pile of iron, with just some of their clothes to lie on.

The next day their trip was continued down the Ohio River, onto the Mississippi to St. Louis, Missouri, where they changed boats for Guttenberg, Iowa. The trip up the Mississippi River was uneventful. After arriving in Guttenberg, he worked for his board a while, until his parents obtained a tract of government land and instituted the development of a 40-acre farm in Jefferson Township, Section 21, on Little Cedar Creek. In 1868, his father (Johann Adam) and two sisters died of typhoid fever. All

were buried at Ceres.” (Extract from Clayton County Register, dated Oct. 9, 1930, from an article written by Amelia Berg)

The above is a graphic account of the hardships suffered by one family in making the long trip to the New World. Johann Adam Overbeck married [Catharine Elisabeth Wegmann](#) of Grambergen in 1843 and this union was blessed with seven children, of which four died in infancy or at a very early age. He left Germany with a family of four small children, one of which died in route. Life was hard for the pioneer families of Clayton County, Iowa. It was necessary to haul grain to Dubuque by horse and wagon in the early days. Fortunately, the American Indians were friendly and occasionally lent a helping hand by providing medications known to them to help save the lives of children who had fallen ill. Of the remaining three children, Christoph remained in Luana, Iowa, [Louise](#) settled at Postville, Iowa, and the youngest son [Henry Overbeck](#) relocated to Glenfield, North Dakota, in 1922. Their descendants have now scattered to Washington State and California.

[Christoph Overbeck](#) was a son of the pioneers who at an early age was conditioned to the raw life of the prairie. At the age of nine he was put out to work for his board and room until the family could situate itself so that his services could be utilized at home. The census records for 1860, as taken from the files of the National Archives, show that Chris Overbeck, age 15, was a laborer for Henry Brandt (a cousin). The census records for Garnavillo Township for 1860 further show that Eliza Overbeck, age 14 ([Maria Elizabeth Overbeck](#), sister of Christoph) was a domestic in the home of Fritz Shoenmann of Garnavillo Township. She died two years later. The following is quoted from an article in the Clayton County Register, dated Oct. 9, 1930 (from an article by Amelia Berg):

“When 13 years old he had a severe attack of rheumatism, which ailment had been bothering him some since he was 9 years old. His mother cured the rheumatism with a simple home remedy (obtained from the Indians) and he hasn't been bothered with it since. At the age of 14, he walked 8 miles to Guttenberg, where he attended confirmation school and was confirmed March 28, 1858, by Rev. Adams.”

The following is quoted from the "History of Clayton County, Iowa, Vol. II, Biographical":

Christian H. Overbeck has been a resident of Clayton County since his boyhood, is a scion of one of the sterling German pioneer families of this section of the Hawkeye State, and he has contributed his share to the civic and material development and progress of the county as a successful farmer, as a merchant and as a loyal and public-spirited citizen. He is now living retired in the village of Luana, where he was formerly engaged in the hardware business with which he continued to be identified until 1904, when he sold the same to the present proprietor, Rudolph J. Stoehr.

Christoph Henry Overbeck was born in the Province of Hanover, Germany, on the 9th of June in 1843, and has been a resident of Clayton County for more than sixty years. He is a son of Adam and Louise (Wagman) Overbeck, both of who were born and reared in Hanover, where they continued to maintain their home until 1852 when they immigrated to the United States, their son Christoph H. having been at the time a lad of about eight years. The family remained about six months in the State of Indiana and in the spring of 1853 came to Clayton County, Iowa, and became members of the fine German pioneer colony in and about the present village of Guttenberg.

There Adam Overbeck obtained a tract of government land and instituted the development of a farm, the same having comprised forty acres. On this old homestead which he made one of the productive farms of the county, both he and his wife passed the remainder of their lives - folk of prodigious industry and sterling character, and well worthy of the high esteem in which they were held. They were honored pioneer citizens of this county at the time of their death, and both were earnest communicants of the German Lutheran Church.

Christoph H. Overbeck was reared to the sturdy discipline of the pioneer farms and in the meanwhile did not in the least neglect the advantages afforded him in the schools of the locality. He soon initiated a virtually independent career by finding employment at farm work aside from that of the home place, and at the age of 23 years he became associated with his father in the renting of a farm which he later purchased. To the work

and management of this farm he continued to devote his attention about five years; and after selling the property he purchased a tract of 270 acres in Grand Meadow Township. This large landed estate he developed into one of the model farms of this section of the State by bringing it under effective cultivation and by making the best of permanent improvements, including the erection of substantial farm buildings. There he won distinctive success in connection with diversified agriculture and the raising of good grades of livestock, and he continued his residence on the farm until 1894, when, with a substantial competency, he retired from the arduous labors and manifold cares that had long been his portion and established his home at Luana, where he owns an attractive residence and where he was for a number of years engaged in the hardware business, though he has lived retired from all active business since 1904, as previously intimated in this article.

His career has been that of a quiet, unassuming, persistent and successful worker, unqualified popular confidence and esteem in which he is held. On the 4th of July, 1874, was solemnized the marriage of Mr. Overbeck to Miss [Caroline Bierbaum](#), daughter of Gerhardt and Caroline (Walker) Bierbaum, who were honored pioneers of Clayton County. Mrs. Overbeck passed to the life eternal on the 16th of July, 1899, a devoted wife and mother and an earnest communicant of the German Lutheran Church. Of the children of this union the first, Catherine, died in childhood; Caroline remains at the paternal home; Louise is the wife of John Goerges and they reside in South Dakota; August and Anna are deceased; Benjamin and Margaret are twins, the former being a substantial farmer in Monona Township and the latter being the wife of William Loeske of Denver, Colorado; Eleanore is deceased; Amelia remains at the home of her father; and Emma, Esther and Nora are deceased. On the 24th of December, 1904, Mr. Overbeck contracted a second marriage, when [Mrs. Minnie \(Springborn\) Neverman](#) became his wife. Christoph Heinrich Overbeck died in 1935 at the age of 92.

[Johann Heinrich “Henry” Overbeck](#) was born in Hiddinghausen in December 1815. He grew to young manhood there, and undoubtedly joined the ranks of the

Heuerleute together with his brothers. When it came time for his entry into military service, he was able to escape this service because the physical examination revealed that the second toe lay over the large toe on one of his feet. He claimed that he could walk only by using wooden shoes.

In 1839, at the age of 24, he decided to make his way to the New World. He had become engaged to [Margaret Meinker](#) of the same village. It was agreed that he was to go on alone to ascertain whether or not he could earn a satisfactory living for both of them and if that should be the case he would write for her to follow him. Henry made his way to Bremerhaven, where he took a sailing ship across the Atlantic. He never returned to Germany. (However, approximately 100 years later a great-grandson, [Clyde Henke](#), landed in the same port to visit Germany in 1932. [Christian D. Henke](#) married [Margaret Overbeck](#), granddaughter of Henry Overbeck. His father, Herman Henry Henke, came to the U.S. when he was eight years old. The mother died aboard ship during the crossing. The father of Herman Henke remarried and settled near Holland. It was undoubtedly this Mr. Henke who assisted the Johann Adam Overbeck family to survive the winter of 1852-53 as stated previously.) He had accumulated sufficient savings to pay for his passage. The trip across the Atlantic required about 3 months. He landed at Baltimore, Maryland and made his way overland to Louisville, Kentucky by working at odd jobs. The trip across the Appalachian Mountains was made partly on foot and partly by team.

He was employed in truck gardens for some time. Well pleased with the land, he wrote to his betrothed to come and join him. Margaret Meinker came across in 1840 in the company of a number of people from the area of Schleddehausen. Her trip was made in 13 weeks. She also landed at Baltimore and crossed the mountains in the same manner that Henry had. She carried with her savings amounting to \$185. She met Henry in Louisville in 1840 and they were married there. They lived for a while in Louisville, then purchased a horse, loaded their furniture and possessions on a wagon and set out on foot for Dubois County, Indiana.

During the first 1 1/2 years they lived on the Gyer Farm near Huntingburg. The entire area was woodland and had to be cleared so that crops could be raised. Day after day he worked long hours to cut down the trees and clear the land. Anxious to own land of his own he decided to buy government land. The nearest land office was at Vincennes. He made the journey on foot through an area over fifty miles with no road to mark the route. He bought 80 acres of land for \$180. This claim was situated on what is now the Chris Kahle farm. Later, he bought 80 acres adjoining this from a man named Merhawks.

The land was all woodland. Giant oaks, walnuts, hemlocks and other species filled the area. Wolves, turkeys, and all manner of animal life inhabited the forest. Squirrels chattered in the branches unafraid. The land was situated in a desolate place. Only one or two log cabins had been built in this section. Their first task was to build a log cabin. The land had to be cleared to raise necessary crops. The nearest church was in Huntingburg. They walked to church, carrying the children in aprons. The families were self-sufficient in those days, making candles out of tallow, cloth out of flax, or knitted cloth out of wool. Grain was taken to the mill on muleback a bushel and a half at a time.

All of their seven children were born here. They labored for years to improve the place. Shortly after locating here, they joined the Lutheran Church which had a church house in Sugar Creek bottom about one-half mile west of its present site. Sometime later a new church was founded, known as St. Paul's Evangelical Church. John Henry Overbeck was a charter member and a tireless and faithful worker in Sunday School and other religious activities. John Henry Overbeck donated land for a school house and school was known as the "Overbeck School" until it burned about 1904. John Henry Overbeck always lived on this farm and in his declining years his son Henry cared for him.

Both John Henry Overbeck and Margaret lived to a good old age. Their union was broken when Margaret died in 1897 at the age of 81 years, to be followed by her so faithful husband who died in 1900 at the age of 85 years. Theirs had been a long life. Together they weathered the storms of life. Their hard labor was rewarded. In their old age they could look at their work and say "Well done!" The land that had first been a

wilderness was now filled with well-kept farms and homes. Luxuries at first unknown could now be had. Both were Christians, working faithfully for the church and attending it regularly. *(Extracted from a family history compiled by descendants of John Henry Overbeck and furnished by Rev. John H. Overbeck)*

Attention is invited to the fact that [Henry Overbeck](#), [George Overbeck](#) and [Sophie Overbeck](#) all married Patbergs, while [Maria Overbeck](#) and [Catherine Overbeck](#) married Bracher brothers.

[Marie Engel Overbeck](#) was born Dec. 6, 1817 at Hiddinghausen, Germany. She was the only daughter of Gerhard Heinrich Averbeck and Maria Engel Bettinghaus in a family of six children. The records in the Lutheran Church at Schledehausen show that she was the widow of [Johann Hermann Victor Bussmann](#) at the time of her marriage to [Hermann Heinrich Niemann](#) in Schledehausen on Feb. 21, 1839. There is no record of children having been born to the first marriage. Two children were born to the second union while the family still resided in Germany. In 1853, the year following the birth of their daughter, [Mary Elizabeth Niemann](#), the family emigrated to the United States. Their son, [Gerhardt Henry William Niemann](#), was then five years old. They came to Guttenberg, Iowa, where three brothers had settled before them ([Balthasar Heinrich](#), [Johann Wilhelm](#) and [Johann Adam](#)). No details concerning the manner or date of arrival have been found due to the fact that the passenger lists for these years (for both the National Archives and the Port of Baltimore) were not available for examination at the time of research of the files in the National Archives because they were being microfilmed at the time. Marie Engel Overbeck and her family settled on a farm in Clayton County, Iowa where her two children grew up. She died in Guttenberg on Oct. 2, 1909 at the age of 91.

[Balthasar Heinrich “Henry” Overbeck](#): "The first settlers of Guttenberg proper were five families, sent out by the society (Western Settlement Society, Cincinnati, OH)

who arrived March 8, 1845. The heads of these five families were: B.H. Overbeck, John Ehrhardt, Henry Telgemeier, Charles Niemann, and Chas. Krepahne. Of these, Mr. Overbeck and wife, and the wife of Mr. Telgemeier now are all living in Guttenberg and the others are now dead. The first buildings were the two in Prairie la Porte, small frame buildings, of which one was used as a courthouse and the other as a jury room. This last rested on long sills, which extended at each side of the building for some distance, and when convenience required that the house be moved, as it did occasionally, all that was necessary was to attach ox teams and draw it wherever desired. At the time the first settlers came to Guttenberg there was one other building in Prairie la Porte, used as a dwelling store and this relic of early times is still standing. Messrs. Overbeck and Telgemeier built the first house in Guttenberg proper, and the families of both these men occupied this house for several years." (Extracted from *History of Clayton County, Iowa*)

Balthasar Heinrich Overbeck was the fifth child of Gerhard Heinrich Averbeck and Maria Engel Bettinghaus, born on the parental Hof at Hiddinghausen. He grew to young manhood there. In 1840, at the age of 21, he made his way to the New World. Undoubtedly it was because he was not yet of age that he did not accompany his older brother, Johann Heinrich, who had departed in the previous year of 1839. Balthasar came to Burlington, Iowa, where he resided for about four years. He became a carpenter and cabinet maker. At Burlington he met and became acquainted with [Caroline Mariah Kleine](#), born in Hille, Westphalen, Germany. They were married in Burlington on Aug. 1, 1844 (the records show that the license was issued on July 31, 1844). The following spring they moved to Guttenberg under the auspices of the Western Settlement Society, arriving in Guttenberg on March 8, 1845. The above quote shows that Balthasar built the first house in Guttenberg and that he was one of the founders of the city.

His family consisted of two children who grew to adulthood, although several other children were born who died in infancy. Undoubtedly, the presence of Balthasar in Guttenberg was a factor in inducing, in turn, his youngest brother ([Johann Wilhelm](#)) to come there in 1849, his older brother ([Johann Adam](#)) to come in 1852, and his only sister ([Marie Engel Overbeck Niemann](#)) to come in 1853. It was natural that these

families settled in an environment such as that along the Mississippi River. The terrain in and around Schledehausen and Hiddinghausen is similar to the wooded hills along the Mississippi. Since Balthasar died in 1890, it appears that the history was written shortly before that year. Balthasar continued to reside in Guttenberg until his death at the age of 70. His wife lived one year longer and died in Guttenberg in 1891 at the age of 73.

[Johann Wilhelm “William” Overbeck](#) married in the year 1849 at Schledehausen and in the same year emigrated to the United States with his wife to settle near Guttenberg, Clayton County, Iowa. Johann Wilhelm was the youngest of the six children of [Gerhard Heinrich Averbeck](#) and Maria Engel Bettinghaus. Johann Wilhelm was only eight years old when his father died. His oldest brother, [Hermann Heinrich](#), was then 22. The mother lived six more years and died in 1840 when Johann Wilhelm was 14 years old. [Johann Heinrich](#) left the parental home in 1839, the year before the death of his mother. [Balthasar](#) left in 1840, in the year of the death of his mother. Johann Wilhelm undoubtedly remained at home until 1849, the year in which he married at the age of 23 and emigrated to the United States (through New Orleans) together with his wife. They came across in a sailboat, enduring the hardships of the time. They settled on a farm in Clayton County, where seven children were born to them. Of the four sons, one died of pneumonia at the age of 21, and of the three daughters one died in infancy. The oldest of the three remaining sons ([Gerhard Heinrich](#)) moved westward to Cerro Gordo County, Iowa, because he disliked the difficulties experienced by the farmer annually due to erosion in the sharply hilly land around Guttenberg. Another son, [John Adam](#), found employment in a glucose factory in Marshalltown, Iowa, where he died by drowning at the age of 35. (John’s children [Henry](#) and [Laura](#) would go on to settle in Texas, while his widowed wife [Wilhelmina](#) “Minnie” would remarry and spend the rest of her life in Arizona.) The youngest son, [August William](#), took over operation of the family farm after the death of his father. The two daughters who grew to adulthood married and settled at Rockwell, Iowa, where their oldest brother had gone. Johann

Wilhelm died while still residing on the farm at the age of 58. His wife moved to Guttenberg where she resided until her death in 1901 at the age of 77.

Gerhard Heinrich “Henry” Overbeck: “G.H. Overbeck has lived on the south-west quarter of Section 31 since 1877. The place was partly improved when he purchased it, but he has since greatly improved it by planting a fine grove of fruit trees and erecting a substantial frame house. He is the son of William and Margaret Elizabeth Overbeck, born in Clayton County, Iowa, October 3, 1849, his parents being early settlers of that county. He remained with his parents until 1875. Mr. and Mrs. Overbeck have had four children - William Henry, born November 13, 1878; Willhelmine Katharine, born April 24, 1880; Anna M., born October 18, 1881 (died October 20, 1881); John G., born July 12, 1883.” (From *History of Franklin and Cerro Gordo Counties*, Union Publishing Company, 1883)

Gerhard Heinrich Overbeck grew to young manhood on his father's farm in Jefferson Township, Clayton County. He endured the privations of the time, hard work, long walks to the church to receive confirmation instruction, and a rugged life. One facet of life near the Mississippi River which he could not accept was the annual erosion of the slopes due to the sharp elevations of the hills around Guttenberg, and along the Mississippi River. He resolved at the age of 21 to strike out to the West to find land better suited to his desires. He located in Cerro Gordo County, where the land is relatively flat. Three years in succession he started out in the spring with a team and wagon to plant and harvest during the summer on the land which he purchased near Rockwell, Iowa, and returned in the fall to spend the winter in his father's home. In the spring of 1875 he brought his bride with him to establish a home on the newly acquired holding of land. She, [Maria Eleanora Bierbaum](#), was the sister of [Caroline Catharine Bierbaum](#) who married [Christoph Heinrich Overbeck](#) (a first cousin of Gerhard Heinrich). As has been the custom in the Overbeck family for generations, Gerhard Heinrich took an active interest in church and school activities. For many years a room in the granary on his farm was used as a place for children to assemble to receive pre-

confirmation instruction. He continued as an active farmer until 1909 when he retired to Rockwell, Iowa. He resided there until his death in 1934 at the age of 84.

CHAPTER 5 - MISCELLANEOUS BRANCHES OF THE FAMILY TREE

Due to the nature of the terrain in and around Schledehausen, it was necessary for the surplus members of the family to leave the valley of the Waldmark to seek their fortunes elsewhere. The area around Schledehausen is hemmed in by mountains, hence the supply of land is limited. Until the valley filled up, the members of the family undoubtedly followed the ancient custom of the Teutons to remain near the family clan. However, by the twelfth century when the family names emerged according to the location of the Hof, many had already begun to leave the area. It was logical that many of them would settle in nearby Oldenburg which offers very fertile farming land. Mr. Wilhelm Averbeck established during his lifetime that branches of the family still bearing the name "Averbeck" are to be found not only in the region of Osnabruck, but also in Muenster (Westphalia), in Lower Saxony, and in Oldenburg. Others found their way to Holland and adopted a Dutch version of the name. A Jan Daniel Overbeek, of Rondebosch, Cape Town, Cape Colony, South Africa, born Dec. 26, 1847, General (Retired) is listed with the following additional notation: "This family was, in the early part of the 17th century, seated in the province of East Flanders, in the Netherlands. Leendert van Overbeke, born 1615, was great-great-grandfather of one Nicolaas van Overbeke, born Feb. 1, 1691." (*Burke - Colonial Gentry, Vol. II*, page 627, Harrison & Sons, 59 Pall Mall, London 1895)

The family name does not appear in southern or eastern Germany. However, it does come up under the variants "Overbeck, Hoverbeck" as follows: "A family known in Prussia which held a hereditary position as steward (food) to the king. This family passed out of existence in 1739." (*Stammbuch des Adels in Deutschland*, page 125; *Adels Lexicon oder Handbuch von Johann Christian Von Hellbach*, page 197)

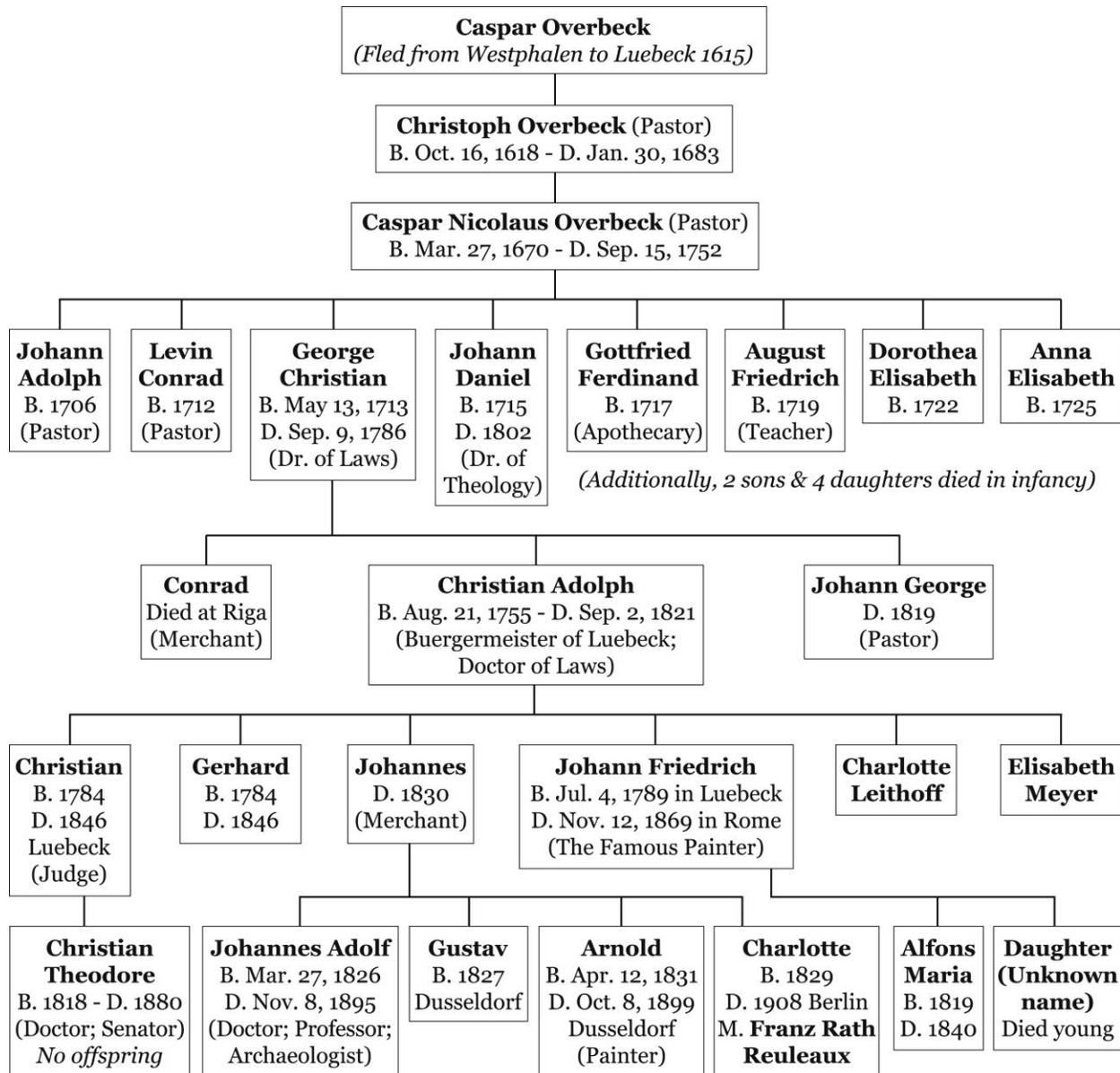
The Library of Congress carries references to the following:

- Alfred Rudolf Freiherr von Overbeck (Baron Alfred Overbeck), born 1877, wrote a book on modern penal methods in 1909 at Leipzig, Germany, a treatise on the Ottoman

Regime in 1917, Swiss-German Relations 1907, Swiss System of Justice 1926, and Bankruptcy, Executions, Swiss in 1940.

- Mrs. Alicia Overbeck wrote “Living High” and “At Home in the Far Andes” in 1935.
- Anne Marie Overbeck wrote on German Commerce in 1922.
- August Wilhelm Overbeck wrote on Civil Law (in German) in 1796.
- Maynard Tillotson, Ahnapee, Wisconsin, lawyer, journalist, married 1800 at Ahnapee Mary A. Overbeck, born in Lake Mills, Wisconsin 1854, daughter of Reverend Henry and Hannah F. (Vollmar) Overbeck. (Parker in America, page 156)
- Winslow Lewis Webber, born 1867, entered the office of City Engineer Theodore Overbeck in 1886 as an assistant and in 1889 was elected city engineer following the death of Mr. Overbeck. (Gloucester Daily Times, May 23, 1913)
- Wilhelm Overbeck, Iron Industry (in German), 1938.

One of the better-known branches of the Overbeck family in Germany was that descended from Caspar Overbeck, a refugee from religious persecution who fled from Westphalia in 1615 and came to Lueneburg. He was a merchant by profession. He married Anna Woltersdorp, daughter of an elder of a large merchandising firm. (*Genealogisches Handbuch buergerlicher Familien von Dr Jur Bernhard Koerner*, Library, University of Goettingen) His only son was born in Lueneburg in 1618 and became a Lutheran Pastor. The grandson of Caspar Overbeck, however, had eight sons and six daughters. (See Family Chart) Out of this family emerged the famous painter, Johann Friedrich Overbeck, born in 1789 at Luebeck and died in 1869. This entire family was famous for its Doctors of Divinity, its teachers, its Doctors of Medicine, and its public leaders. The history of this family is on file in the library of the University of Goettingen, Germany. A book has been written on the life of the painter (*The Great Artists - Overbeck*, by J. Beavington Atkinson), which contains most of the material on file in the University of Goettingen Library.



The following is quoted from the book “The Great Artists”: *Johann Friedrich Overbeck was born, as a tablet on his father's house records, in Luebeck on the 4th of July, 1789. Among his ancestors were Doctors of Law and Evangelical Pastors. His parents were good Protestants; his father was Buergermeister in the ancient city. Seldom has a life been so nicely preordained as that of the young religious painter.*

The family of Overbeck had been for generations preeminent for learning and piety, and biographers have scarcely taken into account either the Classic or the Christian

inheritance of the painter. Religious teaching and living came by long lineal descent; the great, great, great grandfather, Caspar Overbeck, was a religious refugee; the next in succession, Christoph, was a Protestant pastor; and to the same sacred calling belonged his son, Caspar Nikolas, who lived into the middle of the last century (19th). After comes the grandfather, George Christian, Doctor of Laws; and among collaterals signally shines the great-uncle, Johann Daniel Overbeck (died 1802, aged 88); this memorable man was a Doctor of Theology, Rector of the Luebeck Gymnasium, and a voluminous writer; he published thirty or more treatises.

Facility of pen runs through the family. "Duty" might be the watchword of all who bear the name of Overbeck. Springing from a family of preachers, the painter became an evangelist in his art.

An Overbeck family shield was granted to Christian Adolph Overbeck (born 1755, great-great-grandson of Caspar Overbeck) while he was Lord Mayor of Luebeck. This shield has been described as follows: "Above, blue bespecked with red, in the left foreground a gold heart surmounted with a cross, in the right background a diagonally laid chain of three links, at the bottom on a background of green a diagonally laid silver anchor; on the blue-silver crown an adult arm clad in blue, which holds in the bare hand the golden chain between the spread silver wings of a bird in flight." (*Neuer Siebmacher, Buergerliche Wappen, Vol. 5, 6, Page 52, Plate 54*) The house in Luebeck where the painter Johann Friedrich Overbeck was born has been converted into a museum.

A branch of the family which settled in St. Louis, Missouri, was written up in the book "Annals of Platte County, Missouri", by W. McG. Paxton (1897) and contains an extract of an article published in the Platte County Argus, as follows [brackets contain more factual information as obtained from members of the family]:

The Overbeck Family

June 20, 1865

Dr. Henry [Andrew] Overbeck died today. He was born in [Vegesack,] Bremen, Germany, April 3, 1803; came to America in 1820, and settled at Baltimore. He married May 12, 1827, Amelia [Christine] Walz, born in New York February 3, 1808, and still living. Dr. Overbeck came first to Clay County, and thence in 1843 to Platte, settling on Bee Creek. He visited California, and lived five years in Oregon. He was a physician of experience and success. [A brother came later to Baltimore.] Children:

1. Andrew H. Overbeck [Andres B. Overbeck, born Feb. 15, 1828, Baltimore, Maryland; died May 23, 1872 at Jacksonville, Oregon], married Sarah Wilhite. Children:
 - A. Emma Overbeck, married Mar. 18, 1875, J.L. Kenney, born in Scott County, Kentucky, Aug. 21, 1853. Children:
 - I. James E. Kenney
 - II. Henry L. Kenney
 - III. Lena G. Kenney
 - IV. Andrew L. Kenney
 - B. Lizzie (Amelia) Overbeck, b. in Oregon 1857, married in 1877, John B. Mundy, born in Wyandotte County, Kansas, Sep. 2, 1851, son of Isaac. He was marshal of the Weston Court of Common Pleas in 1875, U.S. storekeeper in 1885-89, editor of the *Landmark* at Platte City in 1890, and of the *Weston Journal* in 1892. From disease he has lost a foot. His home is Weston. He is well educated, and a chaste and ready writer. Children:
 - I. Madge F. Mundy, born Apr. 14, 1880.
 - II. Emma B. Mundy, born Jan. 5, 1890.
2. Rosenna M. Overbeck [Rosina M. Overbeck, born Sep. 19, 1829 at Baltimore; died May 23, 1912 in Platte County, Missouri]; married Oct. 23, 1846, Peter E. Miller (son of Lewis), b. Jun. 25, 1825; d. Nov. 14, 1888. Mr. Miller was a man of refinement and superior judgment. He died suddenly while reading a newspaper. His widow lives at the homestead. Children:
 - A. Andrew L. Miller, b. Oct. 31, 1847; married Oct. 31, 1872, Alice Harris, daughter of James H. Mr. Miller lives on a farm north of Platte City, and deals in stock. Children:

- I. Edgar L. Miller, b. Oct. 26, 1874
 - II. James H. Miller, b. Nov. 5, 1880
- B. Amelia Ella Miller, b. Nov. 19, 1854; married in Mar. 1874, James P. Skinner, b. Oct. 19, 1848; he is a successful farmer and resides at the old homestead.
- Children:
- I. Fannie H. Skinner, b. Nov. 16, 1874
 - II. Amelia Skinner, b. Jan. 24, 1877
 - III. Lulie May Skinner, b. May 15, 1883
- C. James W. Miller, b. Sep. 19, 1858; married Feb. 14, 1883, Anna E. Bywaters, daughter of John W. Children:
- I. William E. Miller, b. in 1883
 - II. Millie F. Miller
 - III. Ervin Miller
 - IV. Billy T. Miller
- D. Ben E. Miller, b. Apr. 8, 1862; married May 25, 1886, Alice Oldham, daughter of F.M. Children:
- I. Clarence Miller
3. Henry A. Overbeck [born Mar. 11, 1831 Baltimore; died Jun. 30, 1864 at Jacksonville, Oregon], married Emily Griffin; 2 children.
4. Lou Overbeck [Louisa E. Overbeck, born Jan. 23, 1833 Phillips, Ohio; died Apr. 4, 1861], married J.W. Fink [Jacob W. Fund on Jun. 4, 1857 in Philadelphia]; lives in Ray.
5. [Martha M. Overbeck, born Feb. 10, 1835 Baltimore; died Feb. 22, 1835.]
6. Mary A. Overbeck, born Jan. 27, 1836 at Baltimore [died May 6, 1911]; married Thomas H. Clarke (died in 1879), [Ridgley, Missouri]. Children:
- A. Burden Clarke, married Lizzie Dingey.
 - B. Asenath Clarke
 - C. W.H. Clarke, b. Feb. 27, 1865, married Mary Kimsey.
 - D. James T. Clarke
7. [Benjamin A. Overbeck, born Sep. 10, 1838, Platte County, Missouri; died Apr. 23, 1869 at Hamilton White Pine, Nevada.]
8. John [Frederick] Overbeck, single. [Born Feb. 2, 1841 Clay County, Missouri; died at St. Joseph, Missouri.]

9. Luther W. Overbeck, born in Clay County Aug. 5, 1843 [died Mar. 14, 1927 at Neosho, Missouri where he had settled]; married first time Dec. 19, 1869 Lydia A. Robertson; she died Jan. 12, 1878. Children:
- A. Charles A. Overbeck
 - B. George H. [Henry] Overbeck [Settled in San Antonio, Texas]
 - C. William [Robertson] Overbeck
 - D. Carrie L. Overbeck
 - E. John [Clarence] Overbeck
 - I. [John Clarence Overbeck II, born 1908 at Woodward, Oklahoma.
 - a. John Clarence Overbeck III, Tulsa, Oklahoma.
 - i. David Overbeck, born Jun. 1959.]

Mr. Overbeck married the second time Nov. 21, 1883 Mrs. Alice Dale, daughter of Michael H. Gabbert. Mr. Overbeck is a successful farmer, and an urbane Christian gentleman.

10. [William] J. Overbeck, b. May 27, 1846 [at Platte County, Missouri]; died Dec. 31, 1894 [at Platte County]; married Oct. 3, 1872, Mary E. (Dora) Stark, born Jun. 6, 1851. He was educated at Pleasant Ridge College, studied medicine with his father and at the Electric Medical School at Cincinnati; was elected sheriff of Platte County in 1880, re-elected in 1882, and was chosen collector in 1890-91. But, finding his health impaired, he went to Colorado, hoping its health-giving atmosphere would help him; he returned in 1894, without benefit, and died the last day of the year. Dr. Overbeck was a man of refinement. Nature had made him a gentleman. Mrs. Overbeck was educated at Camden Point, and possesses beauty, modesty and amiability. Children:
- A. Andrew P. Overbeck, born Nov. 3, 1873; married Apr. 24, 1895, Maggie Fry.
 - B. John T. Overbeck, born Nov. 17, 1874.
 - C. Harry F. Overbeck
 - D. James S. Overbeck
11. Amelia W. Overbeck [born Dec. 6, 1848 at Platte County, Missouri], married Oct. 29, 1874, Joseph H. Parrott. Children:
- A. Henry H. Parrott
 - B. Ella N. Parrott
 - C. Joseph O. Parrott

An interesting sidelight is cast on a branch of the family now residing in Indianapolis, Indiana and bearing the name of Overbeck. An individual named William Overbeck was born in Germany under another name, married there, and begot three children in his native land. After having served in the army, having been injured and released from military service, he refused to be recalled to active service again when war recurred. He left Germany with his family, changed his name to Overbeck, settled in Ohio, but because he was unable to obtain work there as a painter he came to Indianapolis. Altogether, twelve children were born to this family bearing the name of Overbeck. Thus, it can be seen that exceptions to the family tree occur. On the other hand, it was discovered during the course of this research that a family originally bearing the name of "Overbeck" (residing in Minneapolis, Minnesota) changed their name to "Johnson".

The passenger lists of ships bearing immigrants to the U.S. for the last century carry many by the name of Overbeck. A Lewis Overbeck, age 38, merchant, entered New York in 1837 aboard the North America, coming from Spain. Cities like Cincinnati, Ohio list many bearing the name "Overbeck" in the telephone directory. The census records for Cincinnati of the 19th century already listed many by the name as having come from various parts of Germany and with a large variety of professions. A branch of the family living in Cincinnati reported that one of their members went to South America a number of years ago and was never heard from again by his family. A General Overbeck was among those tried by the War Crimes Commission in Germany following World War II. An Overbeck Avenue is on the map in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

The early 20th century saw the production of ceramic art by six sisters named Overbeck; however, it was discovered that an ancestor of theirs had modified the surname from "Overpeck". The sisters' "Overbeck Pottery" was a regional success in Indiana, and was the inspiration for a play by Tom White titled "The Misses Overbeck". The Museum of Overbeck Art Pottery in Cambridge City, Indiana, showcases the works of art produced from 1911 to 1955 by Ida, Margaret, Hannah, Harriet, Elizabeth and Mary Frances Overbeck.

Overbecks continue to be in the news today. Joy Overbeck is a famous writer living in Colorado, who has contributed many humorous syndicated essays to newspapers, as well as written books like "Love Stinks".

Steve Overbeck owned a successful chain of automotive repair shops in the Cincinnati area, as well as hosted "Autoline", a radio talk show about cars, before his death in 2017.

A women's soccer player by the name of Carla Overbeck made a name for herself in the sports world. Born May 9, 1968 in Pasadena, California as Carla Werden, she was team captain of the legendary 1999 U.S.A. Women's Soccer Team that won the Women's World Cup and made stars out of Brandi Chastain and Mia Hamm. Her husband, Greg Overbeck, owns a handful of restaurants in North Carolina, and they have a son (born in 1997) by the name of Jackson Overbeck. Future research may well tie in this famous family to the ancestral Averbecks from Hiddinghausen.

Honorary Family Member status is given to actor William Sadler, who portrayed a space mission commander by the name of William Overbeck in the 1997 comedy film "Rocket Man".

In Germany and America the spirit of adventure continues to pervade the Sippe Overbeck-Averbeck. Continued research will undoubtedly disclose many more interesting chapters which might be added to this family history.