

The first Hey to come to the Lee County area was Jacob Hey. He was born December 15, 1813 in Winden, Renish, Bavaria which at that time and until 1815 belonged to France. His older brother Abraham, a farmer, was set up with farm equipment and when Jacob was not set up, Jacob sold-out and came to the USA.

Jacob came to the USA in April, 1836, arriving in New York City, June 1, 1836 on the Ship Charlemagne. [He lived in] New York City, later moving to Poughkeepsie, New York at which place he married Christina Volk in 1843.

To this union with Christina were born three children, Jacob Jr., Mary Elizabeth, and a younger child. In 1851, Jacob came west with his family and purchased a farm near Milwaukee, but before moving onto the farm, his first wife and youngest child died. He immediately returned to Poughkeepsie, and after four years, married Clementina Dahl in 1855. She was born in Badin, Germany in 1820 and died in April 21, 1887. They lived in Poughkeepsie, New York. Jacob worked in a pharmacy there.

Jacob had a son by his first wife, Christina, who was also called Jacob and fought in the Civil War. Later, the son Jacob went to Overbook, Kansas. He attended Jacob Hey's funeral (his father) in 1898. Jacob's other children were Carrie, Peter, and Emma who married a Snavely and moved near Los Angeles. Jacob's other child, by his second wife, Clementina, was my great grandfather, John Phillip Hey. He was born in Poughkeepsie, NY on February 11, 1856. They moved to Illinois in March of 1856.

Jacob Hey bought part of his 160-acre farm in 1857 and another 40 acres during the Civil War. He and his son John Phillip farmed this. On February 26, 1878, John Phillip married Elizabeth Baer and soon after purchased the farm from his father. He was supposed to pay six hundred dollars per year until the death of his father, but since there were no written records and no evidence that he had paid, John had to dig up twelve thousand dollars when Jacob died.

John Phillip and Elizabeth had nine children altogether. Three of them died at very young age. The other six: Mary, Clement, Henry, Abram, Ira, and Verna. Mary A. Hey was born March 14, 1880, Clement was born March 8, 1882, and Henry March 8, 1884. Two sons born between March 1884 and September 1889 lived just a short time. Then Abram was born September 25, 1889, Ira was born January 31, 1893, and Verna born April 29, 1896. Those born before 1890 were born one mile south of Penrose, and Ira and Verna were born three-quarters of a mile south of Penrose. None were born in the hospital, but grandmother Mary Herr Baer usually came to help when they were born.

John Phillip was an excellent carpenter and built many houses in the area.

Here are four in Sterling Illinois:

1104 6th Avenue was built for Clement Hey. John Phillip lived there 4 years.

401 6th Avenue was built in 1900. The home place. Here Clement, Mary, Abe and Ira were living in the 1900 census. Grandpa Henry was living on a farm working.

812 3rd Avenue.

1206 1st Avenue was built for Barny and Margareta Stoltz, the parents of my grandmother, Margaret Stoltz Hey. Grandpa Henry and she were married there as well as Katy and Lidia. Marg and Henry were living there in 1910.

He built some of the wire mills early buildings as well as other houses in Sterling. He enjoyed orchards, grafting and beekeeping. He lived for a time in St. Louis and also California before returning and living with his daughter Mary and working at Hey Brothers until retirement. He died February 2, 1945.

Clement and Henry's mother, Elizabeth Baer Hey, died February 9, 1921 of breast cancer.