

Carl Friedrich Hermann Purfürst
a.k.a.
Herman Purfeerst
Steele County, Minnesota

Carl Friedrich Hermann Purfürst, hereafter referred to by his chosen Anglicized name of Herman Purfeerst, was born July 18, 1830 in Neustadt an der Orla, Germany. He was the second of eight children born to Johann David Ernst Purfürst (1802-1866) and Christliebe Wilhelmine Seltmann (1799-1888).

Herman's immigration (ship passenger manifest) record has not yet been located. The first record of him in America was his Naturalization Petition which was submitted on August 17, 1852 at the Court of Common Pleas, Circleville, Pickaway County, Ohio. In those records Herman stated that he had "landed in 1850". In the record of his Final Naturalization order, which he received from the same court on the February 25, 1856, he indicated that he had resided in the United States "for the five years last past" (1851 ?) and in the state of Ohio for "upwards of three years" (1853 ?). Whatever may have been Herman's arrival date, there was sufficient time for him to have advised his brothers Frederick and Charles as to his location prior to their respective departures from Germany as is outlined in the paragraphs that follow.

It was in Ohio that the Purfürst brothers would gather before heading west.

Herman's brother Johann Friedrich Purfürst (1832-1885) a.k.a. Frederick Purfeerst, immigrated through the port of New York on April 29, 1852. His ship manifest record would clearly state that Ohio was his destination. Six months later, on November 2, 1852, Frederick petitioned the Court of Columbus, Franklin County, Ohio for his naturalization.

Their brother Karl Friedrich Ernst Purfürst (1828-1895), a.k.a. Charles Purfeerst was the next to immigrate, arriving at the Port of Baltimore, Maryland on September 21, 1852. He was accompanied by their sister Christiana Paulina Purfürst (1836-1895) a.k.a. Pauline Purfeerst. She eventually took residence in Newark, Essex County, New Jersey where she would marry a cousin, Carl Franz Leopoldt, who had immigrated at about the same time through the port of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. It is not clear as to why Charles and Pauline chose Baltimore for their port of entry but 1850 census records indicate the presence of a John Purfeerst and a Henry Leopoldt living there. It is assumed that Frederick accompanied his sister to their cousin Carl Leopoldt in New Jersey prior to joining his brothers in Ohio.

It would be later in Newark, New Jersey that Pauline would be joined by their remaining sister and their remaining brother as well as the family parents.

The next record of Charles was two years later where on October 17, 1854 he submitted his Naturalization Intention (for citizenship) at the Court of Columbus, Franklin County, Ohio.

The first two years of Herman's movements, from the time of his 1850 immigration to when he stated he arrived in Ohio (1852) cannot be accounted for. The same is true for Charles' and his first two years between 1852 and 1854. Frederick, on the other hand, stated that he lived in New York City, New York for the first six months after he immigrated in 1852.

Immigrants, upon arrival in America, generally went to the location of a friend or relative who may have preceded them. As a result of other research efforts, it has been determined that other Purfürst immigrant family members lived in New York City, New York during the 1850 time frame. Possibly this New

York family was everyone's initial stopping point in America and the central source of information regarding each brother's status and location.

It could be speculated that the reason the Purfeerst brothers gathered in Ohio was due to the fact that beginning in 1800, that state was one of the earliest to conduct land auctions and accordingly had numerous land companies.

Fredrick was apparently the first of the three brothers to have left Ohio, as on January 1, 1855 in Covington, Fountain County, Indiana, Frederick married the former Katherine Aubart (1838-1911).

Herman and his brother Charles were then to follow on west together. Following Herman's 1856 Naturalization in Ohio, their first stop would be in Covington, Fountain County, Indiana where their brother Frederick had taken up residence. Here Herman also was to meet his bride. On March 6, 1857 in Covington, Fountain County, Indiana he married the former Catherine Kiser. She was born June 7, 1828 in Bavaria, Germany.

Presumably Herman and his bride Catherine, accompanied by Herman's brother Charles, left for Minnesota soon after their wedding.

The October 23, 1857 Minnesota Territorial Census indicated Herman and wife Catherine, along with his brother Charles, were living together on the same property: Township 108, Range 19 (later to be known as Union Prairie Township, later Orion Township, later Lyon Township and finally Merton Township), Steele County, Minnesota. Herman had purchased land in Section 15 of Township 108; Charles had purchased land in the adjacent Section 10. The Census does not state upon which section everyone is residing; however, since Herman's name is mentioned first we would have to assume it is his land. It is also interesting to note that although the names were collected at the same time, Herman's surname is clearly spelled "Burfarst" while Charles' surname was spelled "Purfurst". Herman's name is reminiscent of spellings of "Van Barfurst" used by the previously mentioned New York Purfürst family who was residing in Brooklyn New York during this same time frame.

During the months of May and July, 1854 those Minnesota lands ultimately to be occupied by Charles and Herman had been surveyed by the Surveyor-General office and developed into six-mile intervals to create townships of thirty-six sections, each one mile square. In the general description of the Minnesota township where the brothers were to live, filed on April 10, 1855 at the Dubuque Surveyors-General Office, the surveyor stated that "the northern half (where Herman's property was to be located) was by far the best. The area was dry and rolling with light, sandy and rich soil, well suited for growth of grain. Water was rather scarce. There was little timber except near the southern boundary." Although surveying had been accomplished in 1854 and filed in 1855 it was never formally certified until March 31, 1857.

On April 1, 1857 Herman's brother Charles took occupancy of 160 acres in Section 10, Township 108 North, Range 19 West, later to become Orion Township (later Merton Township), Steele County, Minnesota..

On April 20, 1857, essentially across the section line from his brother, Herman took occupancy of an additional 160 acres in Section 15, Township 108 North, Range 19 West, in what was to be known as Orion Township (later Merton Township), Steele County, Minnesota. Herman occupied lands prior to formal acceptance of Surveyor-General filings, the completion of which put in motion the auction of public lands. It was therefore necessary for Herman to initiate a Right of Pre-Emption certificate which

he completed on October 10, 1860. On that certificate he stated that he had occupied those lands beginning April 20, 1857. In the process of confirming his occupancy, the Minnesota Land Office certified that his house was "16 by 20 feet square and 10 feet high (with) a good roof and floor, containing 1 door and 3 windows and was a comfortable house for a family to live in... and (had) 28 acres plowed and 60 fenced and under cultivation".

Herman, as the first occupant of his Steele County lands, obtained a first-title deed (Patent) from the Federal Government. His land patent was recorded on October 10, 1860. The lands were recorded as the North East One-Half of Section 15, Township 108 North, Range 19 West, Merton Township, Minnesota. On October 25, 1860 Herman would sell the NE quarter of this one-half section to Frederick Schettlan (who also came from the Purfeerst home town of Neustadt, Germany).

Herman would secure ownership of these 160 acres of land in Steele County by the use of a Military Bounty Warrant that he obtained from Arson Harjo of the Seminole Indian tribe in consideration of \$120.00. Harjo was legal guardian of Fo lo Lah, minor child of deceased warrior Fose hat chee Yaholu who died in Tampa, Florida in 1836. Yaholu had earned the Warrant by virtue of his service in Captain Black Dirt's Company, Seminole Volunteers Florida Indian War of 1836. It is not known exactly where the transaction took place since the affidavits were stated to have taken place in "Indian Territory West of Arkansas, Agency for the Seminole Indians".

The process of Military Bounty-land Warrants was such that in exchange for as little as 14 days military service the individual would be eligible for a document (Warrant) that could be exchanged for 160 acres of public-domain lands. This process started with the War of 1812 and was subsequently extended and modified various times. These warrants could be assigned or sold which is how Herman obtained his.

The Military Bounty Act should not to be confused with the Homestead Act which came into affect in 1862. Herman did not "homestead" property in the true sense of the government term.

On October 25, 1860 Herman would buy 120 acres in Steele County. The South one-half of the NW Quarter Section and the North quarter of the NW Quarter Section of Section 15, Range 19 West, Township 108 North was purchased from Frederick A. Schettlan.

On July 8, 1862 Herman would sell 40 acres in Steele County. The SE quarter of the NW Quarter Section of Section 15, Range 19 West, Township 108 North was sold to his brother Charles for the sum of \$100.00.

During the War of the Rebellion (Civil War) Herman, age 34, would serve as a volunteer in Company C of the Minnesota Second Regiment of Cavalry from February 27, 1865 to November 17, 1865. During the fall and winter of 1864-1865 the Second Cavalry participated in an Indian Campaign at the Missouri river and along the eastern edge of the Badlands in present-day western North Dakota. They were part of a 2,200-man operation, along with contingents from Kansas, Iowa and the Dakota's. At the time of his enlistment, however, Herman's regiment was stationed at the barracks in Fort Snelling, Minnesota therefore he did not participate in any battle situations. The Civil War lasted until May 26, 1865 when the last Confederate army surrendered. The companies of volunteers were then mustered out as quickly as possible which probably explains Herman's short tour of duty. For this service his widow would later be paid a pension of twelve dollars a month.

Herman Purfeerst and his wife Catherine Kiser had established their home in Merton County, Minnesota; however, she died on June 17, 1871. She had given birth to two sons, Frank Purfeerst, born

about 1866 and Alvin Purfeerst, probably born about 1871. Neither was to survive her. It is believed that mother and the two sons died during the great flu epidemic of 1871/1872. Catherine was interred in the Merton Township Cemetery, Steele County, Minnesota. No death records or burial locations have been found for the sons.



Herman & Elizabeth Sherning Purfeerst - 1896

On January 2, 1872 Herman married the former Elizabeth Schmidt-Sherning. She was born on January 24, 1835 in Mecklenburg, Prussia. They would have but one child born to them: daughter Wilhelmine A. Purfeerst.

- Herman Purfeerst and Elizabeth Sherning's only surviving child, Wilhelmine A. Purfeerst was born May 22, 1874 in Steele County, Minnesota. She would never marry. She died October 10, 1955 in Owatonna, Steel County, Minnesota and was interred in the Merton Township Cemetery, Steel County, Minnesota

Herman and Elizabeth would remain in Steele County, Minnesota for the remainder of their lives. Herman died May 19, 1906 in Owatonna, Steel County, Minnesota. Elizabeth died May 6, 1922 in Owatonna, Steele County, Minnesota. They were interred in the Merton Township Cemetery, Steele County, Minnesota.

To her marriage with Herman Purfeerst, Elizabeth Schmidt Sherning brought four children from a previous marriage. Elizabeth's former husband, Charles Sherning, died by drowning in the Straight River of Owatonna, Steel County, Minnesota in April 1867, five months before their last child would be born. Their four children were: Charles Frederick Sherning, Sophia Johanna Sherning, Matilda Sherning and Elizabeth Sherning. (Matilda and Elizabeth are thought to have been twins)

1. Elizabeth Sherning Purfeerst's first child (Herman Purfeerst's step-son), Charles Frederick Sherning was born February 28, 1863 in Beaver Dams, Dodge County, Wisconsin. When he was a young man he moved to Phillipsburg, Deer Lodge County, Montana where he worked primarily as a rancher. On September 24, 1890 in Phillipsburg, Montana he would marry Hannah Agnes O'Rourke. The daughter of Peter O'Rourke and Ann Burke, she was born March 3, 1873 in Wausau, Marathan County, Wisconsin. Charles died December 12, 1931 in Phillipsburg, Deer Lodge County, Montana. Hannah died September 13, 1955 in Pullman, Whitman County, Washington. They were both interred in the family plot in the Missoula County, Montana Cemetery. They had two daughters: Elvira Sherning and Edith Sherning.
 - 1.1. Charles and Hannah Sherning's first child, Elvira Sherning was born December 31, 1891 in Phillipsburg, Deer Lodge County, Montana. In Montana about 1917 she married Warren Mason Olney, Sr. The son of George Washington Olney, Sr. and Hannah Eliza Proffitt, he was born June 30, 1875 in Genesee Township, Kandiyohi County, Minnesota. Elvira died September 04, 1976 in Salem, Marion County, Oregon. Warren died September 02, 1943 in Eugene, Lane County, Oregon. They had four sons: Harold Darwin Olney, Claude Wesley Olney, Warren Mason Olney, Jr. and George Washington Olney
 - 1.1.1. Warren and Elvira Olney's first child, Harold Darwin Olney, was born August 5, 1918 in Dillion, Beaverhead County, Montana. On October 19, 1946 in Tillamook, Tillamook County, Oregon he married Vivian Marcella Anderson. The daughter of William Ernest Anderson, Sr. and Charlotte Wade, she was born January 1, 1920 in Tillamook, Tillamook County, Oregon. They had a daughter: Nancy Carol Olney.
 - 1.1.1.1. Nancy Carol Olney married Frank Elliott Miller and had children Randolph Joseph Miller, Charles Nathan Miller and Brian Eric Miller.
 - 1.1.2. Warren and Elvira Olney's second child, Claude Wesley Olney, was born April 8, 1922. On June 15, 1945 he married Marjorie Holroyd. The daughter of Wilfrid James Sr. Holroyd and Nellie Savage, she was born April 3, 1921 in Los Angeles, Los Angeles County, California. They had children David Olney and Linda Christine Olney.
 - 1.1.2.1. David Olney
 - 1.1.2.2. Linda Christine Olney married Arthur Saflow and had children Joshua George Saflow and Bradley Greg Saflow.
 - 1.1.3. Warren and Elvira Olney's third child, Warren Mason Olney, Jr., was born December 3, 1924. On September 6, 1952 he would marry Virginia Bittinger who was born October 08, 1930. They had two children: Karen E. Olney and Robin Olney.
 - 1.1.3.1. Karen Olney married Blair Ashton and had children Katy Lynne Ashton and Brent Ashton.

- 1.1.3.2. Robin Olney married Dale Reppert and had children Justin Wesley Reppert and Heather Marie Reppert.
- 1.1.4. Warren and Elvira Olney's fourth child, George Washington Olney, was born May 11, 1926. On May 10, 1949 he would marry Barbara Prince who was born October 31, 1932. George died September 01, 1992 in Seattle, King County, Washington. They would have one daughter: Brenda Fay Olney.
 - 1.1.4.1. Brenda Fay Olney married Eugene Wright and had children Travis Austin Wright and Lance Colton Wright
- 1.2. Charles and Hannah Sherning's second child, Edith Sherning, was born September 28, 1894 in Phillipsburg, Deer Lodge County, Montana. On November 20, 1918 in Missoula, Missoula County, Montana she married Dennis Joseph Nadeau. The son of Joseph Nadeau and Celina Gobey, he was born February 9, 1887 in St. Paul, Hennepin County, Minnesota. Edith died October 31, 1979 in Bremerton, Kitsap County, Washington. Dennis died October 30, 1942 in Missoula, Montana. They were interred in the family plot in the Missoula County Cemetery, Missoula, Montana. They had two children: Irene Gertrude Nadeau and Lucille Jane Nadeau.
 - 1.2.1. Dennis and Edith Nadeau's first child, Irene Gertrude Nadeau, was born March 15, 1922 in Missoula, Montana. On March 5, 1941 in Missoula, Missoula County, Montana she married Matthius J. Hildman. The son of Edward J. Hildman and Elizabeth Wirth, he was born November 8, 1918 in Manogo, Dickey County, North Dakota. Irene died December 22, 2000 in Lakewood, Los Angeles County, California. Matthius died April 29, 1985 in Lakewood, Los Angeles County, California. They had two children: Shawn Hildman and Theresa Ann Hildman.
 - 1.2.1.1. Shawn Hildman married Marie Josephina.
 - 1.2.1.2. Theresa Ann Hildman married Steve Albee and had children Jenefer Marie Hildman, Nicole Irene Hildman, Janet Albee and Rebecca Louise Albee.
 - 1.2.2. Dennis and Edith Nadeau's second child, Lucille Jane Nadeau was born August 22, 1926 in Missoula, Montana. On August 28, 1944 in Missoula, Missoula County, Montana she married William Raymond Burt, Jr. The son of William Raymond Burt and Eva Emmaline Pitts, he was born July 24, 1922 in Bozeman, Gallatin County, Montana. Lucille died October 1, 1999 in Pasco, Franklin County, Washington. William died December 21, 1997 in Tracyton, Kitsap County, Washington. They had three children: Denice Irene Burt, William Raymond Burt III and Christopher K. Burt.
 - 1.2.2.1. Denice Irene Burt married Donnie Lew Garrow and had a son Dustin Lee Garrow.
 - 1.2.2.2. William Raymond Burt III married Janet Lynne Reaves and had children Heather Ray Burt and Michael Burt.
 - 1.2.2.3. Christopher K. Burt married Nancy Chandler and had a daughter Rachelle Louise Burt.

2. Elizabeth Sherning Purfeerst's second child (Herman Purfeerst's step daughter), Sophia Johanna Sherning, was born April 2, 1866 in Fox Lake, Dodge County, Wisconsin. On April 19, 1892 in Steele County, Minnesota she married Frederick David Clinger. The son of David Clinger and Mary Davis, he was born July 5, 1858 in Peoria, Peoria County, Illinois. Sophia would die February 15, 1953 in Des Moines, Polk County, Iowa. Fred would die January 22, 1944 in Des Moines, Polk County, Iowa. They were interred in the Glendale Cemetery, Des Moines, Polk County, Iowa. They would have one son: Donald Frederick Clinger.
 - 2.1. Frederick and Sophia Clinger's son Donald Frederick Clinger was born September 9, 1895 in Owatonna, Steele County, Minnesota. He married Ingeborg Longland who was born November 12, 1900 in Hardin County, Iowa. Donald died August 30, 1964 in Des Moines, Polk County, Iowa. Ingeborg died December 7, 1984 in Tucson, Pima County, Arizona. Theirs was a childless marriage.
3. Elizabeth Sherning Purfeerst's third child (Herman Purfeerst's step daughter), Matilda Sherning was born September 1867 in Owatonna, Steel County, Minnesota. On December 26, 1906 in Owatonna, Steel County, Minnesota she married John C. Tausendfreund who was born about 1858 in Germany. They would operate a boarding house in St Paul, Ramsey County, Minnesota. Matilda's date of death has not yet been determined. John died June 13, 1934 in St. Paul, Ramsey County, Minnesota. Theirs was a childless marriage.
4. Elizabeth Sherning Purfeerst's fourth child, (Herman Purfeerst's step daughter), also named Elizabeth Sherning, was born September 2, 1867 in Owatonna, Steel County, Minnesota. She never married. Elizabeth died August 28, 1951 in Owatonna, Steele County, Minnesota.



Elizabeth Sherning Purfeerst & Wilhelmine Purfeerst - 1925