

PART TWO

Joseph Kaufmann was born May 29, 1856, in a two-story log cabin near the settlement of Greencreek, Illinois, and was baptized as a Catholic in St. Mary's Church in that community. He was the youngest of the six surviving children of Ferdinand and Elizabeth (Osterhaus) Kaufmann.

After age six, Joseph attended school taught by Francis Hoene in Greencreek; the school was one and one-half miles from the home of the Kaufmanns. Shortly after this, Joseph's father died, so it's no wonder these young children know so little of him. As was the custom of the German people, most everyone walked to where they wanted to go; and so it was with the children - they walked to school for years.

In those times, the schoolmaster was very strict, demanded rigid attention, enforced discipline with either a rawhide whip or ruler and allowed no mischief or horseplay in the classroom. Children in this community all spoke the German language but were taught English in school. Teachers also taught them their daily prayers and prepared them for first holy communion.

Joseph was an apt and eager student. After absorbing all he could learn in this rural school, he decided to become a teacher himself and obtained permission to attend the college in Teutopolis, a town about five miles from his home. Here he earned his teacher's certificate issued by the County Superintendent of Schools at Effingham, Illinois. During those early school years, Joseph learned to play the organ and to sing. Not having many opportunities for diversionary pastimes, the young Kaufmanns passed many leisure hours singing and playing music.

After finishing his final schooling at Joliet, Illinois, Joseph returned to Greencreek to teach in the school he attended as a youngster. There he taught the children of his friends and relations and also those of his former acquaintances, including those of his former teacher, the Hoenes. Numbered among his students were many who in later years moved to Greencreek, Idaho: Arnzens, Nuxolls, Hoenes, Hussmanns, Schmidts, Jansens, Dasenbrocks and others.

One of his pupils captured his fancy as she grew up, early developing to maturity. She was Elizabeth, the eldest daughter of Ferdinand and Catherine Nuxoll, prominent and popular residents of that German community of pioneers. Despite the difference in their ages, permission to wed was granted by her parents. After the banns were published and grand preparations were finished, Joseph and Elizabeth were married on the 17th

day of November, 1885, by the Reverend Father Marcus Tinnell in Saint Mary's Church at Greencreek, Illinois. Witnesses to this wedding were Anton Jansen, John F. Nuxoll, Philomena Bernardina Nuxoll and Maria Sanders. The first three named here later also became residents of Greencreek, Idaho. I was told that the usual customary German shenanigans were perpetrated on this couple at their wedding at which everyone had a good time.

Following the festivities, Joseph and Elizabeth moved into a small apartment in the rear of the schoolhouse where he was the schoolmaster. He continued teaching in this school for the ensuing seven years; and when the birth of their fourth child became evident, Joseph purchased a farm about four miles north, across Greencreek bordering the little Wabash River, in an area called Bull Flats. Several years later a country school was built three-quarters of a mile from this farm, and Joseph was given the teaching position there. His children attended that school for the next nine years. Some of the time, when Joseph was too busy with his farming, other teachers took over his professional duties.

Josepha, a daughter of Joseph, recalled playing with her brothers down along the river, where the crops were always planted on the bottom lands (called "bottoms"), as people then didn't think corn would grow well on the hilly lands where they lived and where the timber grew.

About all the meat they had to eat was salt pork sometimes varied with squirrel or rabbit. Vegetables and fruits were canned or dried in the fall. Nuts, growing wild in abundance, were picked and stored for winter. Wash day was always dreaded as the water had to be carried from a thirty foot deep, hand-dug well and then heated on the kitchen stove, the clothes boiled in a wash boiler and then washed in a hand powered wooden tub washing machine. A sister of Mrs. Kaufmann's was usually hired to help on wash day, for which she was generally paid a dollar, a good wage in those days. Wood used as fuel for cooking as well as heating had to be cut, dried and stacked for the winters which were severe.

The Joseph Kaufmanns lived simply but well - usually were among the first to have the latest in transportation and living conveniences. Shopping was by mail order catalog and by monthly trips via horse and buggy to the towns of Tuetopolis or Effingham. Later a small town, Sigel, grew up near Greencreek; and folks could go there to catch a train or do some necessary shopping. However, at Greencreek there never were stores - just a church, school and a few homes.

By the end of the nineteenth century, Joseph had accumulated some three hundred acres of land, a good sized herd of livestock and a family of six children. A large new carpet adorned the livingroom floor and a fine new piano, a rarity in any home of the day, stood proudly with the organ in the parlor.



The old Joseph Kaufmann farm house near Greencreek, Illinois, where the family lived from 1893 to 1901. Four miles North of Greencreek near the Wabash River and 3/4 mile from the School shown below. In picture examining cellar stairs are Josepha (Kaufmann) Romain and her son-in-law August Hoene. She lived here as Josepha Kaufmann till she was 13 yrs old and attended the school at Bull Flats.

On the right is a picture of the Bull Flats school built near the Joseph Kaufmann farm and where he was the first teacher and where the first four of his children attended some terms. The building now is being used as a hay and grain storehouse. These pictures taken in the fall of 1974, when Josepha and several of her family made a visit to Greencreek and were taken around by Henry and Herman Hoene.



Shown standing outside the school she attended as a young girl is Josepha Romain. With her is shown her daughter Lena Hoene. Looking out the door is the author of this story.