

DR. ERNEST ADOLPH BUEK, A BRIGHTON PIONEER (cont.)

In 1838, the well-educated Dr. Buek and his family arrived in Hamburg Township to build a new home and future for themselves. Unable to practice his profession as a lawyer because of the language barrier, the family endured a precarious existence. Dr. Buek paid for the land and for the first supplies for his family out of his dwindling store of German gold. Receiving in change "wild cat" currency,, much of which was practically worthless, his money soon vanished and their only visible means of support was his garden. The love of gardening, inherited from his father and grandfather now stood them in good stead. This supplied the family with many necessities of the table. In winter the daily fare was usually "Schwarzbrod, Speck und Pelkartoffel", with molasses in place of butter. Once a week, on Sunday, they treated themselves to white bread and butter.

But the woods were full of wild game and the lakes teemed with fish and hunters and fishermen among their neighbors always remembered that German family with all those little children, living there on the north side of the lake. Wise and motherly Susan Galloway, who lived down the road on the way to Brighton, was an ever present help in time of trouble. Like most pioneer women, she was more than generous with advice, sympathy and something to eat.

Dr. Buek knew both French and Italian in addition to his native German, but lacked a **speaking** command of English. He had come to America to practice his profession but found there was no law business for such as he. Instead he pursued his inherited passion for horticulture. Cultured and wealthy guests of Major and Mrs. Edwin Cust, nearby neighbors, marveled at the doctor's formal beds of flowers and the artistic manner of landscaping, faithful to that left behind in his native Hamburg. His pioneer neighbors, who by tremendous toil, had cleared their land solely for the purpose of raising crops of wheat, corn and potatoes, viewed his efforts as a waste of good land. Not content with the products of his craft, Dr. Buek transplanted colonies of the various wild flowers, found everywhere in the woods, to a certain spot at the edge of his garden. It is said that in memory of him who forsook the courts of law, with their unpredictable ways, for the gentle art of gardening and the happy ways of flowers, they bloom annually.

Probably the little mother, Lisette, often wondered where their next meal was coming from but the children were frolicsome and happy and like the young wild creatures of marsh and woodland, grew to be sturdy and reliant. In spring and summer they helped in the garden or tramped the virgin forest for wild flowers. A daily evening's chore was going for the cows that, in an almost wholly unfenced country, strayed afar, often seeking some distant swampland where finding them was a real adventure. (Condensed and edited from "A Biographical Sketch of Dr. Ernst Adolph Buek, compiled by Robert Lee Watson". To be continued.)

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