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FROM GERMANY TO GENOA, THE CONRAD FAMILY

Just before Christmas, 1832, a boat from Germany docked in New York harbor. Immigrants aboard included the Charles Conrad family. (His father, Jacob, a shoemaker, stayed in Germany as did a sister.) With wife Maria Catherine, sons Jacob (10), Charles (4), Phillip (1) and daughter Mary Magdelene (8), Charles lived in Albany and Montgomery, New York for three years. During this time daughter Elizabeth was born. His sister had lent him \$400.00 which he almost lost due to forgery in a bank in Albany. Other than that they had no funds. Assuming they traveled the Erie Canal a boat was boarded to cross Lake Erie to Detroit in 1835. Traveling by foot, he took up 80 acres in Section 23, Genoa Township: W $\frac{1}{2}$ NW $\frac{1}{4}$, recorded June 6, 1836. In their new home his growing sons were called upon to provide labor in clearing land for farming. Son John was born in Michigan in 1842.

For several years son Jacob worked in Green Oak Township for \$4.00 per month. When Jacob reached 30 years he "...went to California by water." (Around the tip of South America.) For three years he received \$3.00 a day sowing wheat in the San Jose Valley. For a time he also worked in the Red Woods. His German ancestry and its characteristic attributes of frugality and economy, stood him in good stead. He headed back to Michigan in 1855, with enough cash to get himself started. Neighbor Elizabeth Dorr, born in New York, became his bride in 1856. Two sons, Louis and Henry, and three daughters, Caroline, Maria and Augusta were born to them. Louis and Henry married sisters, Lydia and Ida Gangnuss, respectively. (Daughters of Rev. Henry Gangnuss.) Caroline married William Musch, Maria and Augusta married brothers, Adam and Conrad Weber, respectively. One tended to marry those one met in school, church or who were neighbors. Among the charter members of St. George Lutheran Church of Genoa were Jacob and Elizabeth's fathers. They contributed funds to the construction of the second church on the corner of Crooked Lake and Bauer (Herbst and Hubert) Roads. Many of these folks and descendents are buried at the Lutheran cemetery on Herbst Road. Many still live in the area.

Purchasing land by paying overdue tax assessments Jacob soon acquired 400 acres. Included were about 60 acres on the east side of Crooked Lake. His farming consisted of wheat and stock. The arrival of the railroad ensured a convenient and sure means of getting both to market. Brothers Charles and Phillip also purchased land nearby. Charles and Otto Lahser of Redford bought the Conrad farm on Crooked Lake and Round Lake in 1917, selling lots. They sold to the Burroughs Adding Machine Company, who also bought around the south end, as a place of recreation for their employees and families. In 1981 Oak Pointe Development purchased the property. (Compiled by Marieanna Bair from 1891 Portrait and Biographical Album; census records; Society archives; St. George Cemetery records; obituaries from the Brighton Argus and Early landowners and Settlers of Livingston County compiled by Milton Charboneau. Additions/corrections? 810/229-6402.)