



Left to right: Mr. and Mrs. Dan German, Mr. and Mrs. John German, Jr., Anna and Grant German on porch, Albert German, Dr. and Mrs. George Mitchell (the former Minnie German), Lottie and Freddie Mitchell, Fred German, Mr. and Mrs. Fred German, Sr. and Margery Mitchell in front of the old German house near Aubrey Corners. The house was built big to accommodate hops pickers at harvest time when that crop boomed in Richland County after the Civil War. Trudy Kinyon photo.

## John German House – Aubrey Corners, Richland County – circa 1870.



John German - German family photo archive.

John German who owned a farm of one hundred and forty-one acres, in sections 20 and 29, Ithaca Township, was one of the pioneers of the county and was one of the few who claimed Wales as place of birth. He was born on the English border of Wales, July 31, 1828, and was a son of David B. and Margaret (Wood) German, both likewise natives of Wales, where the former was born Feb. 14, 1789, and the latter June 1, 1791. The father died Jan. 22, 1877, in Richland County, and was buried in the Derrickson Cemetery in Ithaca Township. The mother died April 7, 1861, and was laid to rest at Oriskany Falls, Oneida County, New York. They were married in March 1810, and their eight children were all born in Wales. The family came to America in 1840, when their son John was twelve years of age, and they first settled in Oneida County, New York, where the mother died in 1861, as already noted. The father continued his residence there for twenty-seven years, when he came to Richland County, where he passed the remainder of his life. The following is an accounting of their eight children: Edward who was born Mar 27, 1811,

went west during the gold rush in California, in the early '50s. He died at sea while enroute and was buried from the vessel on which he was a passenger, leaving a widow and four children; Thomas, born March 28, 1817, was the father of four children; Mary, born June 15, 1820, married Benjamin Benbow, of Richland Center and they had five children; Pryce, who was born Jan 28, 1823, was killed by the explosion of a shell while a member of the Twenty-sixth New York Infantry, in the Civil War, and was survived by his two children; Margaret, born November 10, 1825, married David Ostrander, of Richland Center, and they had three children; John who married Louisa Parlin and had nine children, of which seven survived to adulthood; and Elizabeth, born September 8, 1831, died in her native town in Wales.



**The John German House front parlor. Many of the original family portraits are still in place. Trudy Kinyon photo.**

John German received his rudimentary education in his native land and supplemented this by attending the common schools in the State of New York, where he also learned the machinist trade. He worked for a number of years on the New York Central Railroad and followed his trade in the east until 1867, when he came to Wisconsin and located on the Aubrey Corners farm, the land having been mostly wild when it came into his possession. His inventive and mechanical skills were brought into play in various ways since he had settled on the farm. He invented what was designated the cheese-factory milk can, which was manufactured by the Sturgis & Burns Manufacturing Company of Chicago, under patent and bearing the trademark of "German" in honor of its inventor. He also invented a horse-drawn corn planter, and an adjustable hospital bed which all held patents.

In politics German was a Republican and he held various minor township offices and served four years as a member of the school board of his district. He was an agnostic in his religious views, and known to be liberal and tolerant of others. On January 5, 1857, German was united in marriage to Miss Louisa Parlin, daughter of Josiah and Angelica (Powers) Parlin, the former of whom was born Aug 31, 1805, and died Sept 9, 1856, and the latter of whom was born Aug 6, 1811, and died June 22, 1847. The Parlins became the parents of two daughters, of whom Mrs. German was the survivor.



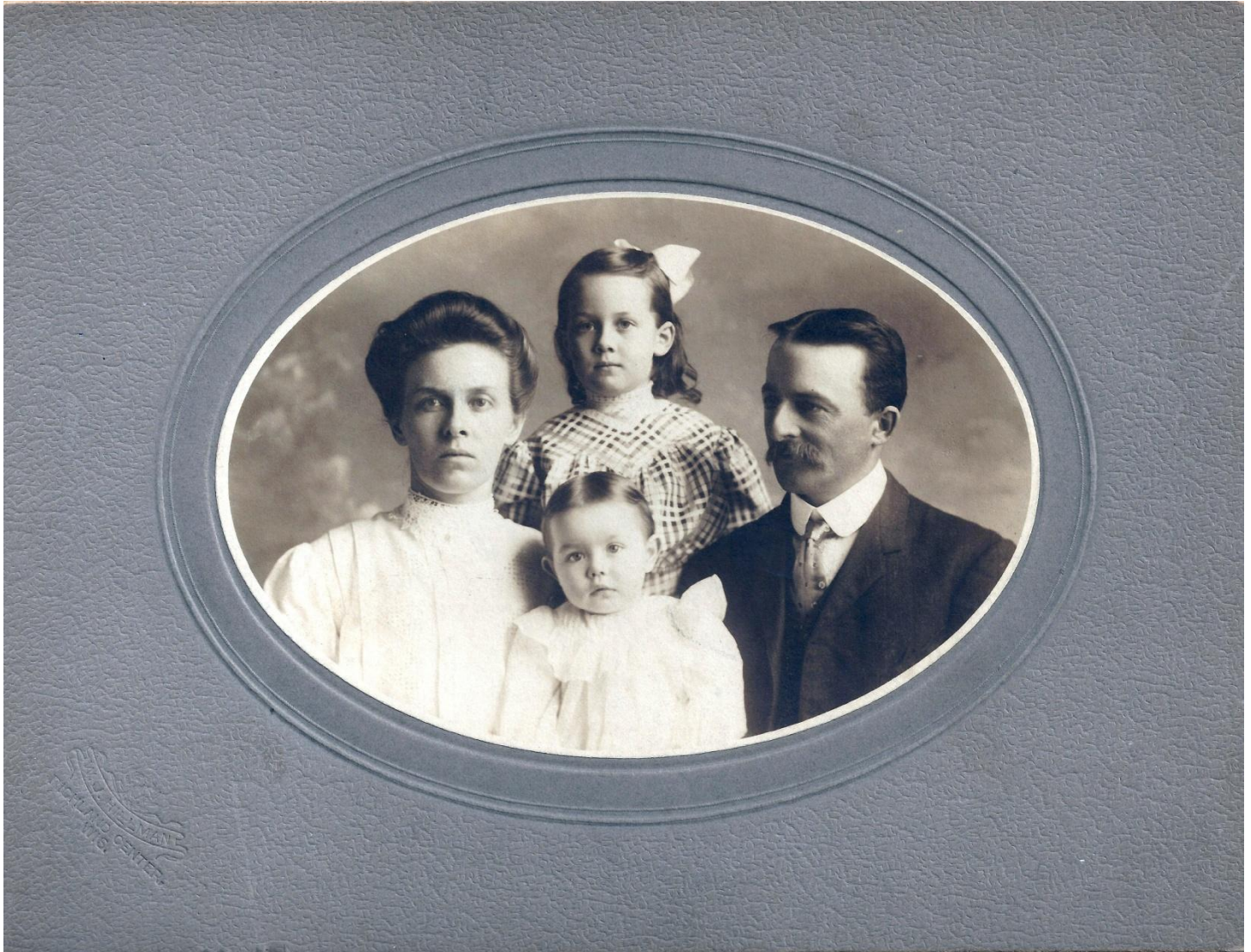
The Parlin family had a number of artistic and accomplished members that were well-known in their time. Hiram Powers, an Uncle of Angelica Powers, was a noted sculptor who gave to the world of art many celebrated productions, the most noted of which being the "Greek Slave." It was one of the best-known and critically acclaimed artworks of the nineteenth century. The first publicly exhibited, life-size, American sculpture depicting a fully nude female figure. His wife, Sarah Elizabeth (Hayne) Powers, was a sister of Robert Young Hayne of South Carolina who was deeply involved in the great "Nullification Act, and it was Titus Powers, the brother of Angelica Powers, who first invented the typesetter. To Mr. And Mrs. German were born nine children: John Franklin, born January 11, 1858, married Elizabeth Ward, and they lived in Ithaca Township; Nina Louisa, born July 14, 1859, died September 9, 1862; Daniel Josiah, born April 6, 1861, married Nellie Thomas and they lived in Geddes, South Dakota; Minnie Eva, born September 21, 1863, was the wife of Dr. George R. Mitchell, of Richland Center, and they had three children, Margaret, Myra, and George R.; Anna Louisa, a teacher of music, born June 7, 1866; Arthur Grant, born June 8, 1869, married Winnifred Crumpacker and they lived in Richland County; Effie Lillian born August 11, 1871, died September 9, 1881; Frederick Parlin, born December 4, 1873, married Edna Cooper and they lived at Neptune, Richland County; Albert Delvino, born December 18, 1875, married Alta Moore, and lived in Richland Center, they had two children, Veva Laura, and Anna Louisa.



**German family photo in 1885. Front row, left to right: Minnie, Albert, Louisa, John Sr., Fred, Anna. Back row, left to right: John Jr., Dan, and Grant.**

John German was a great lover of music and was known for his beautiful tenor voice. The family traveled to the various area schools and towns as the German Concert Company. He grew old graciously and to the very end he enjoyed good

health and an active life; ice skating well into his nineties. He died on April 2, 1924, at the age of 96 as the result of a fall which broke his hip while doing his banking in Richland Center. His wife, Louisa, preceded him in death by 14 years.



**Alta (Moore) German, Veva (front), Anna, Albert German. Thelma Geishert photo.**

Albert, the most well-known of the seven German siblings, stayed on the family farm until he married his first wife Grace Alta Moore in 1899. He started his German Jobbing Service soon after locating in Richland Center. In 1909, Alta died leaving him with two daughters, Anna and Veva. He had built a home on Church Street in 1906 and in 1907 bought the Mitchell Hotel, from his brother-in-law Dr. George Mitchell, located on the corner of Haseltine and Church Streets. In 1912 he built another home almost like the first next to the hotel; renamed the Hotel Badger as well as a warehouse fronting Haseltine Street that.

A.D. German is primarily known for his relationship with Frank Lloyd Wright and the subsequent design and partial construction of the German Warehouse which began in 1917 on the space formerly occupied by the Hotel Badger. In the Richland Democrat of Oct. 4 1916, German explained his plans to build a warehouse to house the commodities he traded, flour, sugar, feed, and other grocery items. He announced the plans were being prepared by the Architect Frank Lloyd Wright and that the building would cost approximately \$30,000. The building eventually cost \$125,000 when construction had to be stopped in 1921 and the functions other than a wholesale grocery warehouse never came to fruition. German used the warehouse for wholesale storage of sugar, flour, feed, coal, cement and groceries from 1921 through 1927. A.D. German married a second time to Mae B. Joslin the youngest daughter of Major W.H. Joslin of Richland Center. Major Joslin had



served in the Civil War with great distinction and his family was well known in Richland Center. Albert and Mae married in 1912, which coincided with building the first German Warehouse directly adjacent to the Hotel Badger. German's business in 1912 was quite successful with additional operations in Platteville and Prairie du Chien.

Mae Joslin German also died prematurely at age forty four from a stroke. Mr. German's third marriage to Lucille Haas was short lived. After he lost ownership of the Warehouse for the final time, A.D. German relocated to Florida to live with his brother Dan, and married for a fourth time. He eventually settled in New York City. He died while on a vacation trip to Holland, Michigan in 1945 at the age of sixty-nine and was buried in New Rochelle, New York.



**The German family home, Aubrey Corners, Richland County. This house is one of the most well-known and conspicuous grand old farm houses in the county with a distinct and documented connection to Frank Lloyd Wright. This is how it looks today in 2016.**