

**LIST OF FAMILY NAMES BURIED AT
GERMAN EVANGELICAL PROTESTANT CEMETERY
4041 S. RACINE AVE., NEW BERLIN WI**

Berkeler	Immig (Imig)	Lintner	Schleglein
Boheim	Jung	Luke (Lucas)	Schley (Schleh)
Braun	Karl	Mafarding	Schwartz
Burner	Kern	Meidenbauer	Schwindt
Conrad	Kieselbach	Meier	Sittel
Damm	Kloss	Michael	Steinbach
Dexheimer	Korn	Muller	Strieder(Streeter)
Diessenhusen	Kraemer	Ohlweiler	Tosch
Don	Krainer	Pelzer	Wagendorf
Eckel	Krappelin	Prior	Wagenknecht
Euler	Kratz	Rauh	Weber
Frank	Kuhlman	Schaefer	Wilde
Graesser	Kuntz (Kuhtz)	Schiffman	Winzenreid
Hubman	Kunz		
Schlegel	Wolf		

*The Christian cemetery is a memorial and a record.
It is not a mere field in which the dead are stowed away unknown;
it is a touching and beautiful history,
written in family burial plots,
in mounded graves,
In sculptured and inscribed monuments.
It tells the history of the past—not of its institutions,
or its wars, or its ideas,
but of its individual lives—of its men and women and children,
and of its household.
It is silent, but eloquent, it is common, but unique.*

Joseph Anderson, as quoted in Mount Moriah by Helen Rezatto

**RECLAMATION AND REDEDICATION
OF A PIONEER CEMETERY**



**REDISCOVERING A PIECE OF OUR HISTORY
SPONSORED BY THE NEW BERLIN LANDMARKS
COMMISSION**

GERMAN EVANGELICAL PROTESTANT CEMETERY PIONEER HISTORY

The first German church in New Berlin was Lutheran and this cemetery is the only evidence still remaining. Many of New Berlin's early pioneers were industrious, thrifty German settlers, educated in German and bilingual in English, with the ability to pay in cash for land and stock.

When Frederick William III, ruler of Prussia, issued a decree to unite the Lutherans and the Reformed into one evangelical congregation, the forced Prussian Union caused many Lutherans to immigrate to America to seek freedom of worship. The first group of Protestant Germans arrived from Rhenish-Bavaria in 1840 led by Christian Damm, his wife Margaret (Wagner) Korn Damm and her sons Jacob and Henry Korn, along with Jacob's wife Katherine (Eiler) Korn. Christian Damm's family built a log cabin on the west side of Racine Ave. Jacob Korn's family settled at the corner of Racine Ave. and Observatory Rd. Henry Korn's family later settled on Observatory Rd., near Woelfel Rd. In 1841, Henry Luke and Philip Strieder (Streeter) arrived. Henry Luke married Margaret, a daughter of Christian and Margaret Damm and settled along Racine Ave. east of and including the Little Grove School area at Swartz Rd. In 1842 the Kerns arrived from Hesse-Darmstadt and in 1843 the Swartzes and Grasers came from Bavaria and Alsace. George Sittel and his wife Anna arrived in New Berlin from New York in 1851, settling along Coffee Rd. Their headstones are among the very few still left standing in the cemetery.

It was in 1842 that those first Germans gathered in Christian Damm's log house to organize their church congregation led by a Lutheran pastor, the Rev. Friedrich Schmidt of Daldorf, Wuertemberg, Germany, who was a circuit-riding preacher. The first burial was that same year - Barbara Luke, 13 days old who died of convulsions. A few years after Pastor Schmidt moved to Michigan in 1844, Pastor Johannes Weinmann of Bernhagen, Wuertemberg, Germany was called to minister to the German settlers in New Berlin. It appears that Christian Damm, who had an original land grant along Racine Ave., donated the land for the cemetery and the first frame church that was built in 1848 and dedicated in 1849. In 1852 Christian Damm sold additional land to the congregation for \$25. The first child baptized was George Wagner, born April 29, 1850, son of Peter and Mary (Sittel) Wagner. The parsonage was erected by 1852 and a parochial school taught by the pastor was established. Johan K. Meidenbauer was the first secretary and historian of the church. Initially he listed 26 contributing families as members. Within three years this list had grown to 42 families.

Subsequent pastors were Pastor Daniel Huber, 1860-1863, Pastor John Zwolanek, 1864-1865 and Pastor Bartelt-1866. Doctrinal differences led to the breakup of the church in the late 1860s. A majority of the congregation wished to leave the Lutherans and form a German Reformed church, echoing the issues that had originally caused the Germans to seek religious freedom in America many years before. The founders of the new church were Jacob Wagner, Daniel Schley, Philip Streeter and Abraham Kern. Initially the new German Reformed group met in the Little Grove School. In 1865 Jacob Korn deeded land to the trustees about a half-mile north of their former church near Racine and Swartz Rd. A brick church was built there in 1865 at a cost of \$800. A cemetery was dedicated at the new site and as the old Lutheran church was abandoned after 1867, the original Lutheran cemetery became nearly forgotten, overgrown and neglected.

Pioneer life was difficult and filled with hardships. Disease, illness and accidents were daily occurrences. Of the 93 interments in this cemetery, 65 were infants or children. As was mentioned, the first burial was a baby of Henry and Barbara Luke. Sadly, they buried a second newborn daughter in 1846, a 13 day old son in 1847, an 18 day old son in 1849, an 11 day old son in 1850, a 13 week old daughter in 1851 and a 10 week old son in 1858. Just as sad are the losses of Christoph and Margareth Krainer. They buried a 9 month old son in 1859, then between July 4 and July 14, 1863 they lost a 17 month old, a 6 year old and a 4 year old to throat angina. In 1865 another 13 month old son died. J.K. Meidenbauer and his wife Catherine had only one child. It was stillborn and is listed on the cemetery record, but they chose to bury the infant near a pine tree on their farm.

Information for this history has been gathered from these sources:
"German Pioneers of New Berlin" by J.H.A. Lacher; "History of St. John's Oakwood Evangelical Lutheran Church;" "Not as German as You'd Think" by Mary Ella Milham; collection of New Berlin Almanacks; New Berlin Citizen, 4/87, and Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod records

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