

Adolph Rehm
Franklin, Hilbert (Calumet Co.)
1869-1876

Adolph Rehm was born near the village of Briete outside the City of Lemgo in Lippe-Detmold on June 15, 1851, son of Conrad and Elizabeth (Langenberg) Rehm, and nephew of Franklin potter Conrad Langenberg.¹ Adolph also had two other brothers, August and Otto, and one sister named Caroline. "As a small boy he did not like his given name of Henrich and requested his parents to call him Adolph which became his accepted given name"² He arrived as a Farmer on April 26, 1869 on the Ship Donau, sailing from Bremen to New York.

... at the age of 18 [he] left his family and homeland, a country that was besieged by war and unrest to explore the freedom and opportunity of America, knowing full well that he would possibly never see his family or homeland again and he never did. He became an American citizen and learned to respect his country and his fellow man. If he had any loneliness for his fatherland he never mentioned it.³

Immediately upon arrival Rehm took a job at Milwaukee with a railroad making its way to Manitowoc. He soon made his way to Franklin, and June 18, 1870 at age 19 was living with his aunt and uncle at the pottery in Franklin, along with small cousins Anna (3) and Louise (1), and his aunt's sister, domestic servant Bertha Schaeferkort, age 12. Rehm traveled around a bit, working in potteries in Milwaukee and Manitowoc as well as at Franklin.

In 1872 Rehm began experimenting with cheesemaking in a leased factory in the SE quarter of section 30, Town Herman. His future father-in-law Herman Hanke established one of the earliest cheese factories in Sheboygan County and may have helped young Rehm learn the secrets of his trade. Rehm married Sophia Hanke on Dec. 2, 1874 and by 1876 was operating a pottery at Hilbert, "A Post office and station on the Wisconsin Central Railway, in Calumet County, 16 miles east of Menasha. Population 300."⁴ He soon returned to the Franklin area and established his own cheese factory in 1876, leasing Hanke's old factory.

At the time of the 1880 census Adolph Rehm called himself a Cheesemaker, age 28, wife 'Sophie' (33), daughters Lydia (4) and Sophia (2), son Willie born in August of 1879.⁵ Neither adult was reported able to read or write, apparently in the English language. In 1887 Rehm was able to buy one of the land parcels which his Uncle Conrad Langenberg owned and farmed in sec. 30. Mr. and Mrs. August Busse had built a log house and a barn on the property and in the spring of 1887 sold the property to Rehm for \$1,800.

Mr. Langenberg owned the north two thirds of the north one-half of the southeast quarter of section 30 in the Town of Herman. It was from this land that Mr. Langenberg obtained the clay he used in his profession. The Rehm family is still in possession of a tea pot that was made by Adolph in 1871.⁶

On November 11, 1893 Rehm purchased 40 acres in Sec. 32, Town Herman, and moved the factory to a new location across the road and continued its operation. The following year on June 23, 1894 at the age of 45 years Sophia Hanke Rehm died and was buried at Saron Cemetery in Sheboygan Falls. Within two years Mr. Rehm married Anna Stoelting who resided in Sec. 33 in Town of Herman with her thirteen brothers and sisters. In 1896 Rehm did a bit of sprucing up:

*Cheesemaker Rehm is giving his house a new coat of paint and having other repairs made.*⁷

The cheese business apparently prospered, as Rehm bought his first automobile in the fall of 1913, a Buick touring car with electric lights and starter. Rehm continued making his award-winning cheese until 1918 (he was paid a quarter-cent per pound more for his cheese than neighboring cheesemakers).⁸ In 1918 the cheese factory was sold to W. Zimmermann and the Rehm family moved, for a short while to nearby Elkhart Lake, and then to a substantial brick house in Franklin built by blacksmith Jacob Eitler in 1880.

*"Adolph and Anna Rehm continued farming in the old fashioned way, hard work [with] never a complaint and ever so content."*⁹ Anna died at her home in Franklin December 12, 1930 and Adolph died on July 9, 1932 at the home of his daughter Sophia Both lie buried in Saron Reformed Cemetery in the Town of Sheboygan Falls.

¹ See Conrad Langenberg biographical sketch for background on Lippe Detmold.

² "History of the Rehm Family" by Leslie W. Rehm, copied typewritten manuscript in author's files

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⁴ Wisconsin Gazetteer for 1876-7, p. 180.

⁵ 1880 Manuscript Census, Town Herman, p. 17, microfilm no. P41553.

⁶ "History of the Rehm Family."

⁷ Plymouth Post German language newspaper, translation by ARC August 6, 1896, original has been lost.

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