

Christian Jountze

Born Bergstadt near Leipzig Saxony Germany

His father was a weaver. At 19 Christian came to America, landing without a cent but had so attracted the favorable attention of the captain of the ship that he lent him \$50⁰⁰ with which to start in his new country. His name had been spelt Kunz but wishing to Americanize himself he changed it to Jountze. He bought a small stock of goods and made his way to Pittsburg where he restocked from a man named Brewer who also befriended him and to whom he often returned in later years for further merchandise. At Osneburg near Canton Ohio there were other Germans of whom he had heard and he went there and soon established a small general store. He married Margaret Gerbe the daughter of a Pennsylvania Dutch farmer, in the course of time bought a farm but always lived in the village of Osneburg where his eleven children were born. He was a man of the highest probity being known throughout the community for his sense of justice. I find among his books a copy of Klopstock, well thumbed. Of his eleven children, my father Herman was the youngest. The boys all helped in the store and had only a country school education. When they reached college age, Christian gave his boys the chance of going to Wittenberg College as he was a devout Lutheran but only on condition that they would promise to go into the ministry. This they all refused to do until the ninth child William consented. His stay there was brief however as he was in a few months convicted by the college authorities of being the ring leader in leading a horse up into the college tower. For this prank he was dismissed. In unanime as the older boys reached the age of 21 Christian furnished each of them with a small sum of money. With this Augustus and Herman made their way to the west beyond the Missouri and became partners in taking up Government land, in buying gold dust from the miners returning from California and Denver. Herman went in 1854 but stayed only a short time as

his father needed him for managing the country store. He remained at home 2 years during which Augustus had considered establishing himself at several points on the Missouri, Plattsmouth, Bellevue, Omaha and Dakota City. Omaha was the place Herman had first favored though then containing a mere handful of people and to Omaha he returned in 1856 when his brother Luther took over the home responsibilities - there the brothers opened a banking business which became the First National Bank in all that region. When Luther joined them in 1863 he was sent to open a bank in Colorado. was joined there later by Charles and Luther proceeded to New York to begin a banking venture in the great City. Charles continued as President of the Colorado National Bank at Denver. Herman became President of the First National Bank of Omaha and Augustus joined his brother Luther in the Knouze Brothers Private Bank of New York. When William came west after the fiasco at Siltanberg College he was sent to Dakota City where after a few months he died of typhoid fever. The nine children of Christian and Margaret Knouze always spoke with veneration and affection of their father and mother and the home established in Danaburg was distinguished for its order, fairness and energetic industry.

In about 1892(?) the four surviving brothers built a charming stone under the Lutheran ^{faith} Church, as a memorial to their parents. I was present with my sister Gertrude and brothers Augustus and Charlie at the dedication ceremonies and was thrilled by the warmth of regard with which my father, my uncles and aunts were greeted by the community.

Eugene Knouze Nicholson
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