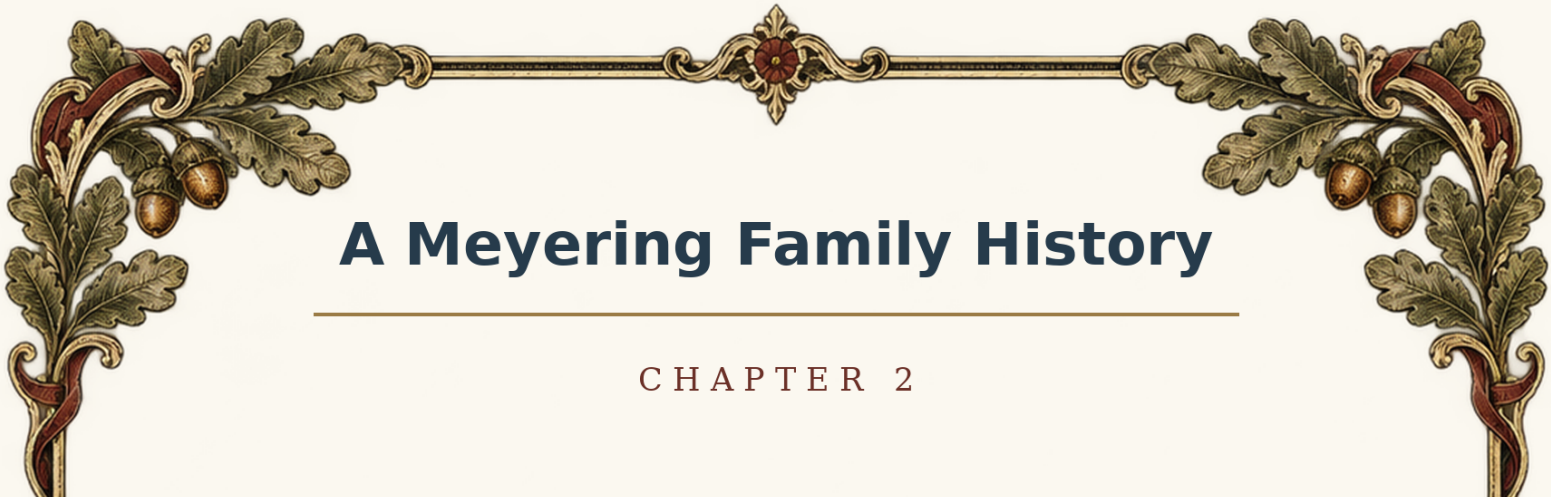




A Meyering Family History

CHAPTER 2

From Bocholt to Rochester

Crossing an ocean, entering a canal city,
and rebuilding a family life in America

1845

Destination Nordamerika

VERSION 2.6

Evidence, historical context, and a family's American beginning



LEAVING BOCHOLT

The Atlantic Between Two Lives

In 1845 the official emigration register at Münster placed Henrich Meyering of Bocholt on a path toward “North America.” That brief entry is the hinge between two lives: the known household in Westphalia and the family later found in Rochester, New York.

Their departure in a changing world



KINGDOM OF PRUSSIA

The black eagle on white represents Prussia, the kingdom to which Bocholt belonged in 1845.



WESTPHALIAN HERITAGE

The white horse on red is Westphalia's traditional emblem, shown here as a heraldic banner.

Artistic interpretations, not documentary flag reproductions. The Westphalian banner is not presented as a verified standardized flag of 1845.

BETWEEN DEPENDENCE AND ADULthood

John, Nineteen Years Old

Johann Wilhelm Meyering was born on 22 November 1825. The Bocholt resident list placed him with his family at property 652 in 1840, when he was fifteen, and again in 1843, when he was eighteen. In the 1845 emigration record he was nineteen: no longer a child, but not yet established in a household or occupation of his own.

What the records tell us

John belonged to a Catholic household headed by Henrich and Louise. His father was recorded as a weaver and later as a Musikus. John was therefore leaving with both a family obligation and a musical example before him.

What he may have faced

As a nineteen-year-old immigrant, John likely confronted an unfamiliar language, uncertain employment, and the competing pulls of family responsibility and personal independence.

The questions before him

- Could he find work before he learned English?
- Would the family remain together in America?
- Could music become a livelihood rather than an occasional skill?
- Was he expected to support his parents and younger siblings?
- What kind of man could Johann become as John?

John gives this chapter its human scale. His later records show that he became a husband, father, professional musician, and soldier. In 1845, however, all of that still lay ahead.

A CANAL CITY OF WORK, FAITH, AND OPPORTUNITY

Why Rochester?

The Erie Canal placed Rochester on a migration corridor linking the Atlantic seaboard with western New York. For a family seeking work, community, and familiar religious institutions, the growing city offered several ways to begin again.

Work

Mills, workshops, trades, building activity, nurseries, breweries, and shops offered a broad labor market.

Community

German immigrants formed neighborhoods and mutual networks around work, kin, language, and societies.

Faith

German Catholic parishes offered worship, sacraments, schooling, social ties, and continuity.

More than the Flour City

The Genesee Valley grew the wheat; Rochester milled, packed, transported, and sold it. Flour was urban manufacturing. John could also have found work in warehouses, canal traffic, building trades, foundries, machine shops, shoemaking, tailoring, printing, instrument work, or the emerging optical trades—perhaps combining daily wages with performances or lessons.

Rochester in 1845

The city had about 25,000 residents. Some 7,468 were foreign-born—about 30 percent—including 1,316 German-born residents. Wards were administrative districts rather than official ethnic enclaves, yet Germans often clustered near work, kin, and churches.

St. Peter and Paul anchored the west-side district later called Dutchtown, while St. Joseph's served German Catholics near Franklin Street. These networks could soften the transition into American life. Sponsors, witnesses, neighbors, and parish families from Bocholt or the surrounding Westphalian region may eventually reveal the personal connection that drew the Meyerings to Rochester.

Rochester's west-side neighborhood known as Dutchtown took its name from the German immigrants who made it their home. Churches, shops, workshops, and social organizations helped families establish a community in which familiar language and customs could endure. St. Peter and Paul served as an important center for German Catholics on the west side, while St. Joseph's served German Catholics near Franklin Street. For newcomers such as the Meyerings, these communities offered possible connections through worship, employment, friendship, and kinship, although the particular people who encouraged their settlement in Rochester remain to be identified.

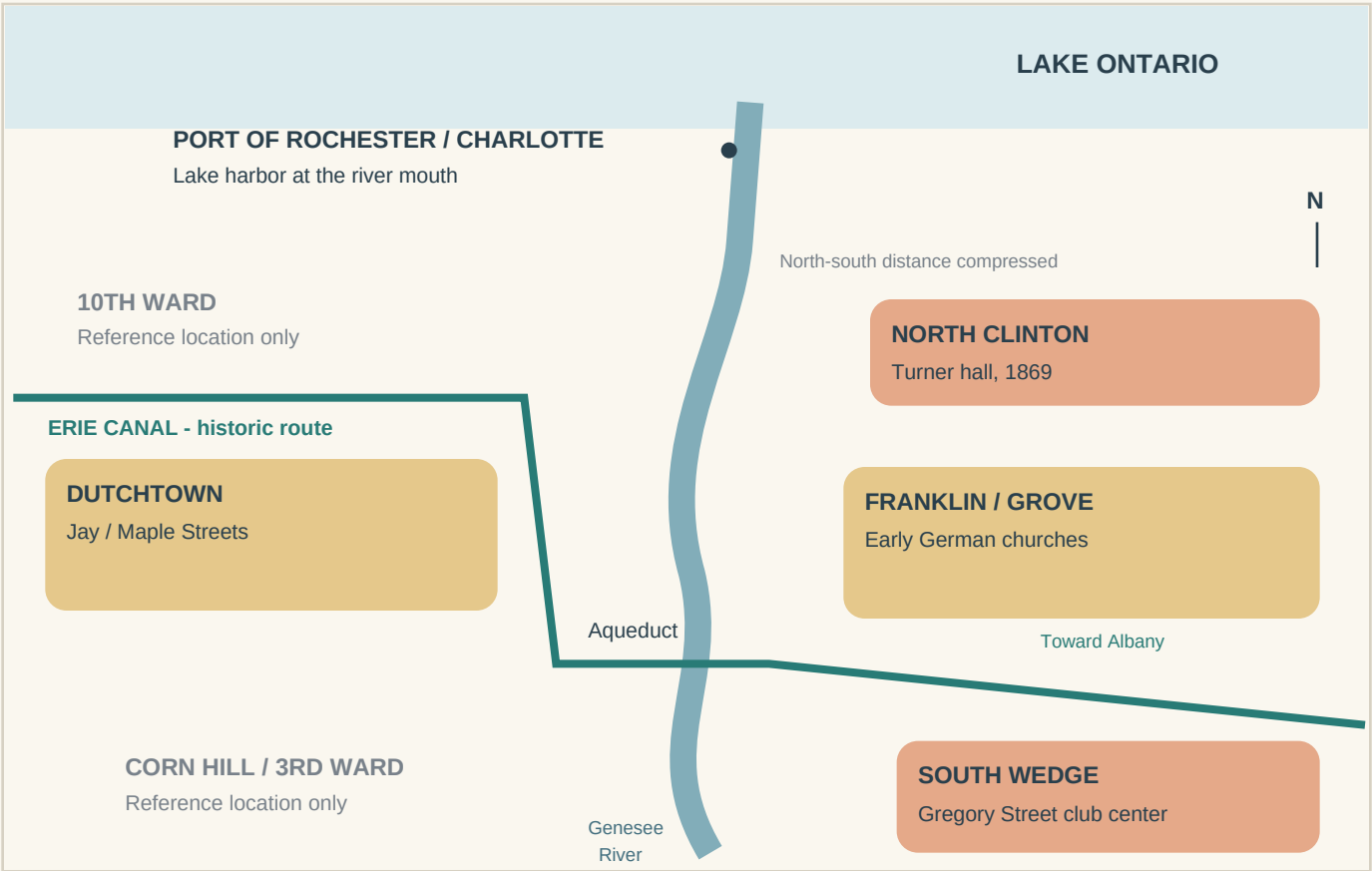
The name Dutchtown reflects a history in which the English word "Dutch" could also refer to Germans. "Dutch" and the German word *Deutsch*, meaning "German," share an older linguistic ancestry. Although "Dutch" eventually became associated primarily with the Netherlands, its broader meaning persisted in American speech. Rochester's neighborhood name belongs to that tradition: it recalled a German community without necessarily implying origins in the Netherlands.

Within the Meyering family, a later descendant remembered hearing their ancestry described as "Dutch German." This recollection may preserve that older American usage, perhaps clarifying that the family was German rather than Dutch in the modern national sense. Their origins in Bocholt, near the Netherlands and within the region's traditional Low German dialect landscape, add a possible borderland association. Neither explanation has yet been established as the family's intended meaning, but the expression survives as a small and intriguing piece of oral history: "Dutch German."

WHY ROCHESTER? | COMMUNITY AND CONNECTIONS

A Place to Begin Again

German community areas and historic transport links



■ Early community roots ■ Later growth

Schematic, not to scale; shading is approximate, not a population measure or ward boundary.
Third and Tenth Wards are reference labels; German concentrations there remain unverified.

AREA	HISTORICAL EVIDENCE
Franklin / Grove	Zion chapel, 1838; St. Joseph's on Franklin, 1846.
Sixth / Ninth Wards	German political communities documented in the 1850s.*
Jay Street / Dutchtown	German-speaking Basket Town developed in the 1870s.
North Clinton	German Turner hall opened in 1869; adjoining school.
Gregory / South Wedge	Later German club center; evidence of continued growth.

*Sixth and Ninth Ward boundaries are not drawn without a dated ward map.

German churches and community ties offered newcomers a foothold before and around 1845. Later districts show how that community grew. The harbor and canal are transport context; the family's arrival route remains unconfirmed.

Sources: McKelvey, The Germans of Rochester (1958), pp. 3, 5, 11, 16, 26;
MCLS, East Side, West Side; Erie canal.org; NY Department of State, Rochester waterfront.

THE HOUSEHOLD OF 1845

Who Made the Crossing?

The Münster entry names Henrich and Louise with eight children as the family prepared for North America. Their ages reveal a household divided between adult children who could travel independently and younger children who likely remained with their parents.

Name in the 1845 household	Approx. age	Life stage
Friedrich Wilhelm	about 23	adult
Henriette Franziska	about 21	adult
Johann	about 19	older child
Anna Elisabeth	about 17	older child
Bernhard Heinrich	about 15	younger child
Franz Albert	about 13	younger child
Clementine Maria Anna	about 11	younger child
Johann Franz	about 8	youngest

Henrich and Louise likely traveled with whichever younger children were still dependent upon them. The older children may have accompanied them, preceded them, or followed later. Tracing each child’s first American record will help us reconstruct how the household made the crossing.

A PORTABLE SKILL

Music as a Family Profession

Henrich had been recorded in Bocholt as both a weaver and Musikus. In Rochester, the next generation carried music into public life. The 1861 American Musical Directory publicly identified Frank, Harmon, Henry, and John Meyering as musicians in one city.

Henry and John shared 53 Joiner Street. The clustering of names, addresses, and occupations is strong evidence that music had become a family profession—not merely a private pastime. It may have been a portable form of cultural capital that crossed the Atlantic with them.

156	AMERICAN MUSICAL DIRECTORY.
	<i>MUSICIANS—continued.</i>
<i>Rochester,</i>	Baron Robert, 52 Edinburgh st.
"	Britton Alex. P., 105 St. Paul st.
"	Efeng John, 72 Joiner st.
"	Meyering Frank, 53 James st.
"	Meyering Harmon, 95 N. St. Paul st.
"	Meyering Henry, 53 Joiner st.
"	Meyering John, 53 Joiner st.
"	Newman Charles, 72 Scio st.
"	Newman John, 72 Delaware st.
"	Perkins Joseph A., 22 Hunter st.
"	Sauer Adam, 5 Gregory st.
<i>Schenectady,</i>	Forrester John.
<i>Troy,</i>	Bulger Thomas E., 12 King st.
"	Colhern J. D., 28 King st.

The American Musical Directory, 1861, p. 156: Henry and John Meyering are both listed as musicians at 53 Joiner Street.

MARRIAGE, CHILDREN, AND AN AMERICAN LIFE

From Johann to John

By the mid-1850s Johann Wilhelm was appearing as John and building an adult household in Rochester. The surviving evidence places his marriage to Elisabeth Catherina Moellers in mid-January 1856 and points to St. Joseph's Church.

January 1856	Marriage to Elisabeth Catherina Moellers. Family sources give 15 or 18 January, and the evidence points to St. Joseph's Church.
1856	Daughter Bertha Catherine enters the family chronology.
1858	Daughter Augusta Louisa enters the family chronology.
1860	Son Reinhardt William enters the family chronology.
1861	John is listed as a musician at 53 Joiner Street with Henry Meyering.

What changed—and what endured

His given name shifted into an English form, but his Catholic marriage, family household, and musical occupation suggest continuity as well as adaptation. Rochester offered room for reinvention without requiring him to abandon every part of his Westphalian identity.

JOHN'S BRIEF CIVIL WAR SERVICE

The Rochester Regiment

A Rochester roster identifies John Meyering as a musician in the 13th New York Infantry. It records his enlistment in June 1861 and discharge in October 1861, linking his established musical profession to the regiment's opening Civil War campaign.

What is documented

Name: John Meyering. Residence or association: Rochester. Role: musician.
Regiment: 13th New York Infantry. Enlisted: June 1861. Discharged: October 1861.

The 13th New York

Known as the Rochester Regiment, the 13th drew eight companies from Rochester and included others from Dansville and Brockport. Its regimental band joined the men who left for Washington in 1861.

The 13th was known as the Rochester Regiment. It left New York on 30 May 1861, served near Washington, and fought at Blackburn's Ford and First Bull Run in July. John's recorded service encompasses this campaign, and the Dansville newspaper account on the following page places "Myering" among the band members returning from Bull Run.

A short but defining service

John's enlistment as a regimental musician joined his established profession to the national crisis. His service lasted only a few months, but it carried him from Rochester into the opening campaign of the Civil War and linked his name to the regiment's musical history.

The Dansville band joins the Rochester regiment

The regiment's musical ties extended beyond Rochester. Scott's Brass Band of Dansville joined the 13th New York Infantry at Elmira on May 20, 1861, according to Dansville's published history; a May 29 newspaper notice indexed by the New York State Military Museum identifies the band by name. Its arrival brought Dansville musicians into the Rochester regiment, establishing a direct musical connection between the two communities.

Sources: Bunnell and Quick, Dansville: Historical, Biographical, Descriptive (1902), p. 50; New York State Military Museum, Steuben County Civil War newspaper index, May 29, 1861.

THE DANSVILLE NEWSPAPER ACCOUNT

“Myering” at Bull Run

Writing immediately after First Bull Run, Clarence Dwight Hess described the band accompanying the 13th New York into danger and its retreat to Camp Union. The Dansville Advertiser printed his account on 1 August 1861.

commenced. They opened their masked
 batteries upon our boys. Our whole artillery
 returned their fire, and at the same time
 continual volleys of musketry were kept up
 on both sides. The constant roar of the
 cannon, the rattle of the small arms, the
 bursting of shell and the screams of the
 wounded, made up one of the most horrible
 scenes I ever could have imagined. We had
 about 40,000 troops in the field, and the ene-
 my about 125,000, including 5,000 cavalry.
 Our boys drove them for about six hours,
 when they received reinforcements, and af-
 ter three hours more hard fighting, the ene-
 my made a charge with their cavalry, and
 scattered our forces in every direction. Ev-
 ery man for himself was then the order, and
 I immediately broke for the woods, Jim
 Newton following closely. I lost drum,
 sticks, music, blankets, revolver and havers-
 sack. I traveled all night, and reached
 Camp Union this morning. Five of the
 band boys have come in, viz: Alex., Myer-
 ing, Tiffany, Newton and myself. The rest
 I have not seen yet. The loss of life was
 immense. I do not know yet who was kill-
 ed in our regiment. We will know in a day
 or two. It is the last battle the band will go
 to. I never want to see such a sight again.
 Our regiment will now probably be soon
 discharged. I write this in haste to let you
 know that I am safe, and hereafter shall
 look out that I remain so.

A name in the aftermath

After the overnight retreat, Hess reported:

“Five of the band boys have come in, viz: Alex.,
 Myering, Tiffany, Newton and myself.”

The clipping places a musician recorded as “Myering” with the band at Bull Run. Taken together with John’s Rochester musician listing and his 13th Infantry roster entry, the evidence strongly points to John Meyering.

Hess’s account therefore gives us more than an overlap of dates: it places the Meyering name within the band’s immediate experience of First Bull Run. The Dansville musicians had joined the regiment earlier at Elmira, and John became part of that shared wartime story.

John's connection to Dansville may have grown from friendships formed during his service with the 13th New York Infantry's regimental band. Further research is needed to establish whether fellow military musicians later brought him into Dansville's musical community.

FOUNDATION FOR THE SECOND DRAFT

Sources & Draft Notes

Family evidence

Münster emigration register entry for Heinrich Meyering of Bocholt, 1845; Bocholt resident lists for 1840 and 1843; family vital and cemetery records.

Immigration records

U.S. National Archives, Passenger Arrival Records and port-by-port research guidance; New York passenger lists, 1820-1897.

Rochester sources

Rochester Public Library, Local History & Genealogy Division: city directories by decade, Digital Newspaper Gateway, Rochester Newspaper Index, and Rochester Immigrants research guide.

Canal context

Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor, History and Culture resources on immigration, transportation, and the growth of canal cities.

Wider world, 1845-1849

National Archives of Ireland, Great Famine records; German Bundestag, Revolution and National Assembly in Frankfurt, 1848/1849; U.S. National Archives, Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo; Library of Congress, California Gold Rush collections.

Church records

Roman Catholic Diocese of Rochester sacramental and archival collections; specific parish affiliation remains under investigation.

Music evidence

The American Musical Directory (1861), p. 156; Ernestine M. Klinzing, "Music in Rochester: A Century of Musical Progress, 1825-1925," Rochester History 29, no. 1 (1967).

Population and neighborhoods

Blake McKelvey, "Rochester's Ethnic Transformations," Rochester History 25, no. 3 (1963), and "The Germans of Rochester: Their Traditions and Contributions," Rochester History 20, no. 1 (1958).

Military evidence

Rochester roster entry for John Meyering, musician, 13th Infantry, citing McIntosh, p. 275; New York State Military Museum, 13th Infantry Regiment history. John's individual service file remains to be obtained.

Dansville band evidence

Clarence Dwight Hess letter, Dansville Advertiser, 1 August 1861, naming "Myering" among five band members who returned to Camp Union after Bull Run; clipping contributed by John Hennessy and preserved at Bull Runnings. A. O. Bunnell and F. I. Quick, Dansville: Historical, Biographical, Descriptive (Instructor Publishing Co., 1902), pp. 50 and 88-89.

Bath research bridge

Family-tree chronology for Hermann Johann Niewerde; original military, residence, death, and institutional records remain to be verified.

Editorial note

This is a second narrative draft. Statements labeled likely or plausible are working interpretations and should be revised as primary records are located. Ages on page 3 are approximate ages during 1845, derived from the family chronology used in Chapter 1.

RESEARCH PRIORITIES FOR READERS AND DESCENDANTS

Join the Search

Family history grows when readers become researchers. The following records offer the best opportunities to extend, refine, and enrich this story. Anyone who visits an archive, recognizes a name, owns a family document, or discovers a new lead can help carry the Meyering history forward.

1 Naturalizations — highest priority

At the Monroe County Clerk, search Henrich/Heinrich/Henry, Friedrich Wilhelm/William, Johann Wilhelm/John, and other adult sons under Meyering, Meiering, Meyring, Miering, and variants. Copy declarations, petitions, oaths, and certificates.

2 Directories, 1845-1861

At Rochester Central Library, trace every year: first appearance, spelling, address, occupation, shared households, and the first weaver or musician listing.

3 Catholic and burial records

Identify the first parish; copy baptisms, marriages, burials, sponsors, and witnesses. Resolve John's 15/18 January 1856 marriage and St. Joseph's claim; document Henrich's original burial and any reinterment.

4 Military and pension

Obtain John's compiled service and pension files; test 13th versus 15th New York, Company E, 27 May versus June 1861, and pension no. 1,154,685. Identify "Myering" conclusively.

5 Newspapers and local records

Search Rochester German-language and English newspapers for bands, performances, arrivals, deaths, and obituaries. Build the household in 1850/1855; check deeds, taxes, ward maps, and 53 Joiner Street.

6 Passenger and Bocholt work

Search 1845-1847 passenger lists at New York, Baltimore, Philadelphia, New Orleans, and Canadian ports, allowing split groups. Map property 652 beside 653/Königsmühle; pursue Henrich's motives and music-teacher work.

7 Later Bath bridge

For the future Niewerde chapter, verify Hermann Johann Niewerde's 1864 registration, Rochester residences, 1910 Bath death, and any institutional, work, health, or family reason for his presence there.

Please preserve complete citations, photographs of original records, exact spellings, dates, repositories, and call numbers so each discovery can be shared and independently followed.