

Story of an Immigrant

Chronicles of the Besse Family from Butternut published



BUTTERNUT. The German authors Dr. Maria Besse and Thomas Besse from Riegelsberg in Germany have published the chronicles of the Besse family under the title “The Mayor of Hornbach Isaac Besse (1652-1725), Ancestors and Descendants“. The new book is being promoted by John Besse, President of the BESSE FOREST PRODUCTS GROUP COMPANIES in Gladstone, Michigan.

The name Besse is fairly well known in Butternut. Henry Besse Sr., a German immigrant, was one of the first men to settle in the area in 1877 and one of the founding fathers of Butternut.

The Besse family history is a typical migration story, which happened many times in Europe in the past: Since the 17th century, there have been emigrations from Switzerland to Belgium, Germany, England, Holland and France as well as from the Palatinate to the United States in the 19th century.

After the Thirty Years' War, the Swiss Isaac Besse immigrated into the German duchy Palatinate-Zweibrücken in 1682. However, it was not a workman who immigrated, but the son of a Swiss notary from the French-speaking canton of Vaud. As the nobly appointed Mayor (*Stadtschultheiss*), Isaac Besse held a public office in the town of Hornbach near Zweibrücken (Two Bridges/Palatinate).

Isaac Besse's grandson Henry Besse from Annweiler, Rhineland-Palatinate, Germany emigrated to the United States in 1849 and served as postmaster in Butternut as did his son and grandson.

This academic study includes numerous old documents from different archives which provide interesting insight into early modern times. The documents tell of the imposing inheritance from the Governor Francis Best (François Besse)

from the Island of Jersey/England, the quarrel over a dowry, French lifestyle, a brief history to Butternut by Ruth Gear and more. On account of the good quality of the documentary material in the Swiss archives, the Besse family tree can be traced back over 21 generations to 1397.



Coat of Arms: The story of the Swiss Immigrant Isaac Besse – here you can see the family coat of arms – is described in the new book of the Besse family. PHOTO: Thomas Besse

• *The Mayor of Hornbach Isaac Besse (1652-1725), Ancestors and Descendants*, 202 pages, hardcover, 106 photos, ISBN 3-937436-03-0, price 20 Dollars, to order, contact Thomas Besse, Germany, <mailto:thomas@besse.de>.

For more information see the website www.besse.de.



Dr. phil. Maria Besse, born in Merzig/Saar in 1958, heads the Research Center „WDW – Dictionary of the German winegrower's language“, a project of the Mainz Academy of Science and Literature. In addition, she is in charge of the “Palatinate Dialect Dictionary” archive in Kaiserslautern. The main focus of her studies is on loanword and interference research (German-Romance languages), onomastics and dialectology.



Thomas Besse, administration graduate, born in Lebach-Dörsdorf in 1958, has worked in the Saarland Ministry of the Interior, Family, Women and Sports for more than 25 years. He is responsible for the organization of European and municipal elections in the Saarland among others. The main focus of his research is on genealogy and regional history. Beyond this he likes photography, web design and sports.