



A Swiss Community in Adams County (Images of America)

Naomi (Eugene) Lehman

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In the mid-19th century, many Swiss families fled their homeland in order to avoid the rigid restrictions placed on religious and political beliefs. Many found solace in the little town of Berne, Indiana, and in the surrounding communities of Adams County. In 2002, Berne will celebrate 150 years of settlement and growth. In preparation, Naomi Lehman has compiled a unique visual history of these family-oriented communities, chronicling the history of the rich ancestral Swiss Emmenthaler culture that is still alive in the area today. Most of Adams County's early settlers hailed from Switzerland's capital of Bern, located in the Canton of Bern, and made the capital the namesake of their new home. The heavily forested and swampy land was cleared and tilled. Homes were constructed, churches flourished, and family businesses opened, some still existing today. Captured here in over 200 vintage images are the trials and triumphs of a classic Swiss community, including photographs of early farming families, industries and businesses, churches, and schools, blanketing not just Berne, but Geneva, Decatur, Linn Grove, and Monroe in Adams County, as well as Bluffton and Vera Cruz in neighboring Wells County.

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