

## WATERLOO REGION HALL OF FAME 2022

### Heidelberg's Six Community Builders and Entrepreneurs

The crossroads village of Heidelberg, straddling both Wellesley and Woolwich Townships, opened its post office in 1854. Six local entrepreneurs toward the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and into the 20<sup>th</sup> century established businesses that would provide goods, services, entertainment, and support for the fledgling community.

The following six men stood apart from their peer group in early Heidelberg. By operating inns, flour and sawmills, dry goods and hardware stores, a cheese factory, a resort, and farms, their enterprises provided food, supplies, clothing, recreation and entertainment for residents. They were leaders in their community who collaborated in founding or participating in benevolent groups, brought music and entertainment to the local area, sponsored cultural activities, and provided employment for many people. Together, they helped to create a "golden age" in Heidelberg and the surrounding community.

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**Henry N. Huehn** was a harness-maker who, in 1888, purchased an existing general dry goods store on the northwest corner of Heidelberg's main intersection. The store provided generations of villagers with a wide variety of hardware, clothes, and "a large assortment of Saskatchewan buffalo robes." Huehn was an Issuer of Marriage Licenses, a Wellesley Township Councillor, and eventually the town postmaster. Because of his store's depth, breadth and longevity, Henry Huehn provided a valuable service to the local pioneering residents and farmers.

**Henry N. Huehn (1853-1934)**

(photo source: *100 Years of Progress in Waterloo County Canada Semi-Centennial Souvenir 1856-*

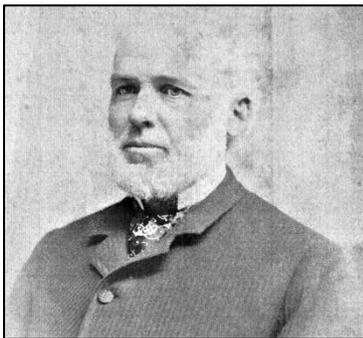
**Charles Kreutziger (1844-1927)** was a miller. He built a large gristmill in Heidelberg in 1879, The Kreutziger Lorne Roller Flour Mill, a state-of-the-art facility that was described as "one of the best equipped modern roller flouring mills in the province." Kreutziger's Saw Mill employed up to 10 people and bought large quantities of logs from local farmers. Later, Kreutziger moved to the city of Waterloo to begin a new career as a house designer and builder. His contributions to the establishment of Heidelberg included his first-class flour mill, and his sawmill that provided employment, facilitated new construction, and capital development. One of the houses that he built in 1893 and heated with steam generated at his mills still stands today.



**J. W. Huehnergard (1861-1945)**

(photo source: *Mark Huehnergard*)

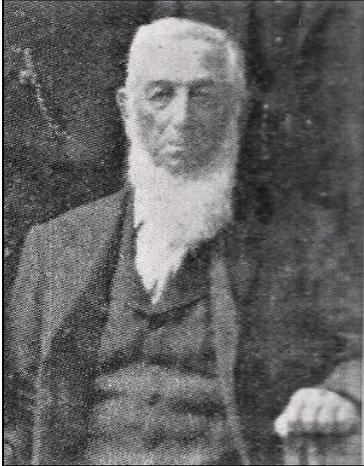
**John Wesley Huehnergard**, who had been a jeweller and grocer, purchased Heidelberg's Dominion Hotel in 1892. The inn was built in 1851, and was the town's second hotel. Huehnergard renovated the building, and opened the second floor, "Huehnergards' Hall," to be used for concerts, meetings, social events and lectures. The hotel became an important social hub for the town. Huehnergard was a singer and accomplished musician, and was the first president of the Heidelberg Music Society. Under Huehnergard's leadership, the society opened a summer resort at Otterbein Lake (later called Paradise Lake). Music programs, sports events, dances, John fireworks, picnic facilities, and eventually a concert pavilion were all established at the lake. Apart from being a successful hotelier, Huehnergard's major contribution to the community was his efforts to provide entertainment and social events for the enrichment of the residents of Heidelberg and the surrounding area.



**Heinrich "Henry" Adam Miller Müller (1833-1922)**

Photo source: *Verna Bice*

**Henry Miller** (Heinrich Müller) immigrated to Canada from Germany in 1847. He opened Heidelberg's third hotel, the Great Western Hotel, in 1860. It became a stage-coach stop and transfer point for overland routes to Millbank, Glen Allen, Stratford, and Berlin. Miller designed his hotel to include a general store that looked out onto Lobsinger Line. His businesses provided important employment opportunities in the village. He bore the risk and financial burden to open Heidelberg's third hotel and first dry goods store. The location of his hotel has operated successfully for more than 160 years, and is known today as The Olde Heidelberg Restaurant, Tavern and Motel.



**Valentine Otterbein** emigrated from Germany to Wellesley Township in 1842. He became a second-generation Wellesley farmer when he took over the operation of his father's farm in 1856. In 1869, Otterbein began serving as the deputy reeve on Waterloo County Council, a post he held for almost 30 years. He was also one of the first directors and founders of the North Waterloo Farmers' Fire Insurance Company, and later served as its president. Winning successive elections either by vote or acclamation, Valentine Otterbein was well liked by his constituents, so much so that the lake beside his property was named in his honour (Otterbein Lake). His involvement with and influence on Waterloo County Council lasted almost three decades.

**Valentine Otterbein (1836-1908)**

Photo source: *Geoffrey Hayes, Waterloo County: An Illustrated History*



**Adam Steiss, Jr.** bought the Great Western Hotel from Henry Miller in 1867. Like his competitor, Huehnergard across the street, Steiss used the space above his barn as a public hall for civic meetings, spelling bees, division court, amateur plays, campaign meetings, horticultural shows, and Farmers' Institute meetings. Below his dry goods store on the property, Steiss began a limburger cheese production facility. The cheese business became very successful with clients locally and in Manitoba, British Columbia, and the Maritime Provinces. Demand for Steiss limburger cheese became so great that even with a new and larger cheese factory in 1901, the company still had difficulty fulfilling all their orders. Described as a "man of industry", Adam Steiss was one of Heidelberg's most successful early residents.

**Adam Steiss Jr (1845-1905)**

Photo source: *Carl F. Steiss*