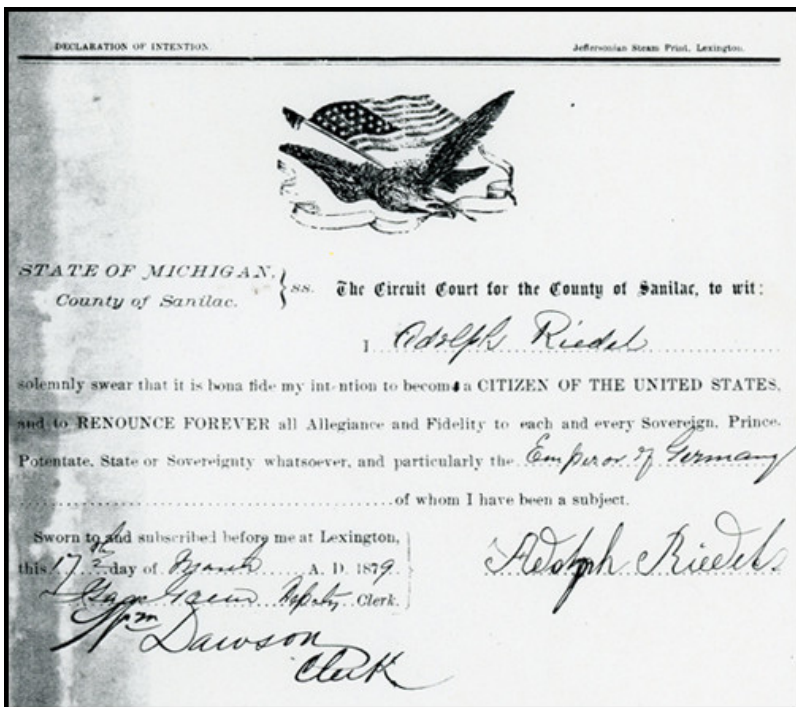


News from Nan

ANNA'S FAMILY HISTORY

ANNA'S COMMENTS ON ADOLPH RIEDEL'S IMMIGRATION RECORD

JULY 16, 2018 | ANNA



Adolph Riedel citizenship application

I've gotten a lot of comments on Adolph's "intention to become a citizen" form and the loyalty oath that it includes, and I'd like to add my two cents.

I think it is a good idea when immigrants come to this country with the intention staying and becoming "one of us" that they are asked to willingly renounce whatever loyalties they once had to their former country (as Adolph was asked to do) and even their extended family. Some of my German ancestors badly wanted to sponsor additional members of their families, and they were bitterly disappointed when the family members were denied passage or could not come because of the late-nineteenth century recession that weakened the U. S. economy.

Leaving aside the issue of refugees, in times past we have focused on skill, talent, hard work, and willingness to leave friends and family behind as key acceptance criteria for immigrants coming to the United States. I think we should re-establish those criteria. I can see how comfortable it must be for immigrants to be able to invite their extended family to join them here, but I think a clean (and often painful) break with the past is almost the essence of the immigration experience.

As an adult language learner myself, I realize how hard it is for adults, even those who have just reached adulthood, to learn another language or understand and adapt to another culture, but we could be more helpful to immigrants in that regard. Many of the European countries do it pretty successfully, and I've read about many U. S. and Canadian communities who also do a great job with assimilation.

I believe in the value of a constant stream (but not a gush) of immigrants joining us "old-timers" here in the USA. Immigrants bring delicious and exotic foods, interesting customs, new ideas, and a "can-do" attitude that has frayed or disappeared in many of us who have lived the "good life" for perhaps too long.

As the child and grandchild of immigrants, I believe they, and others like them, have contributed a lot to this country. I hope we can find a way to work together to lose the vitriol, clean up the mess, and continue to reap the benefits of an open and dynamic society.

◀ 2018 ◀ FORESTVILLE ◀ GERMANY ◀ IMMIGRATION ◀ MICHIGAN ◀ RIEDEL ◀ SAXONY