

LENEXA'S ADAM LEGLER

An accomplished man

Too often, significant local historical figures are simply names — a moniker on the side of a building, an inscription on a roadside sign. But the story behind a name can be quite powerful, since it can reveal a life richly experienced, full of change, and, in the case of Adam Legler, a life tremendously beneficial to our community.

Adam Legler was born on Sept. 21, 1816, in Glarus, Switzerland, a farming community with small amounts of actual farmland. With dreams of what would become a reality — acquiring and farming large areas of land — Adam, his wife Elizabeth and their two children immigrated to the United States.

The family came through the Port of New Orleans in 1845 and made its way to St. Louis. Adam became a cook for the U.S. Army, and in November of 1847 declared his intent to become a U.S. citizen.

He left the service in September of 1851, and President

Fillmore granted him 40 acres of land located in St. Louis County, south of Washington, Missouri.

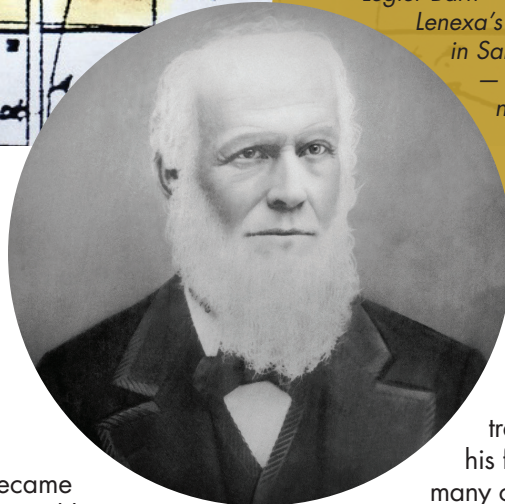
In October of 1852, seven years after immigrating, Legler became a U.S. citizen. It was noted by the State of Missouri that he conducted himself with "good moral character." He continued to dream about adding nearby land for farming, but the contours of the surrounding areas were confining and prevented the expansion he sought.

So, in 1861, he sold his land, boarded a boat at Washington and went up river to Westport Landing at the City of Kansas (later Kansas City) to begin his search for farmland, having heard of vast stretches of level plains.

Before he was able to acquire acreage, he worked for the Muehlebach Packing House while accumulating funds. Three years later, on April 8, 1864, he bought his first tract — 80 acres at the northwest corner of what is now Quivira and 95th Street. (The land had originally been granted to Cynthia Hummingbird through the Shawnee Land Grant of 1854).

Adam built a large farm house and the all-stone Legler Barn on land along what was then the Santa

This map shows the acreage given to Adam Legler's descendants. Quivira Road and 95th Street cross in the middle. Legler Barn — now home to Lenexa's historical museum in Sar-Ko-Par Trails Park — was located at the northwest corner. Henry Legler's Land is now the home of Oak Park Mall.



Fe, Oregon and Military trails. He and his family allowed many of the settlers traveling the trails to stay overnight in their barn.

Legler was a major contributor to Lenexa, and not just in acreage. He also served as a Johnson County Kansas School Director and was deeply involved in civic activities.

During his time in Lenexa, Adam assembled 400 acres of farmland near Quivira and 95th. At one time, he also owned the land of two quarries, one at the northwest corner of what is now 87th and Pflumm, and one at the northwest corner of what is now Renner and K-10, later owned by Holland Quarries.

Adam Legler dreamed big, left his homeland, worked tirelessly, and eventually realized his goal of large-scale farming. He also gave back to Lenexa and the surrounding area through community service, starting with the courtesies he and his family extended to travelers moving down the early trails.

Adam passed April 11, 1893, at the age of 76. He and his wife are buried in the Lenexa Cemetery, which is next to the Catholic Cemetery on Pflumm Road just south of 87th Street.

Legler's land grant from President Millard Fillmore — 1851

