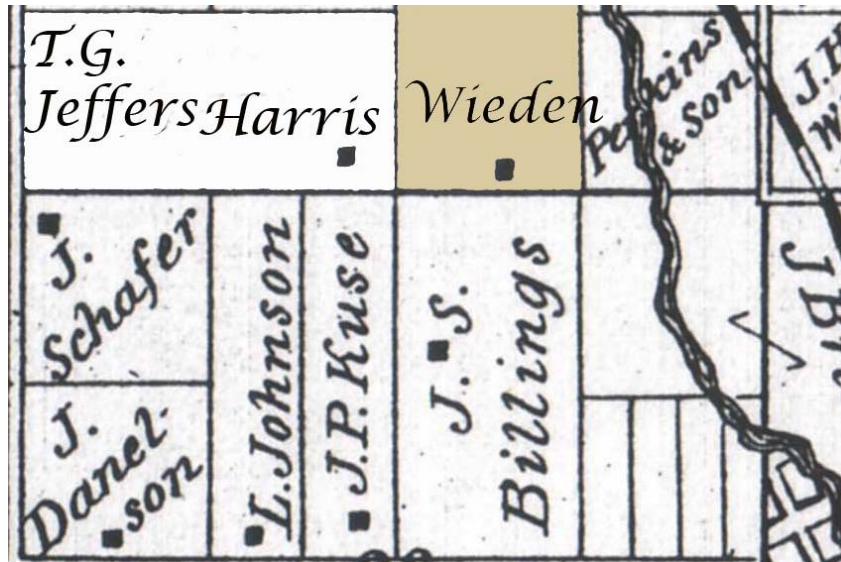


The Wieden Place

Anyone sitting on Bench Six today who is looking north to Allman Avenue would see heavy traffic and modern buildings. Students on fifteen or more school busses travel that route on their way to classes. But what stood there more than a century ago and what happened to the men, women and children who once lived, worked and played there? What happened to their homes?



Portion of Plat Map Drawn After 1889 and Before 1894

Wiedens and Wiedens' Roses

Just about a hundred feet east of the corner of Woodland and Allman, a small log cabin stood in the uncleared forest. William and Ida Wieden had built their home there. They began a small farm on property they purchased through the land agents, Joseph Brucker and Carl Ludloff, in 1885. Brucker sold railroad lands to European immigrants like the Wiedens who had come from Germany and Austria that year. In 1889, the Wiedens built the tiny, two-room cabin on the land.

The family must have had special carpentry skills. The logs they used were hewn or squared off on all sides so that they fit together more tightly than the round and mud chinked logs used in some of their neighbors' homes.



**Carefully Hewn Logs Used in Kuse Home
Once Part of the Wieden Home**

They carved ornate designs into the boards around the windows of their home, which made their cabin more special than the hastily constructed shacks the earliest settlers had built ten years before that.



**Decorations Above the Window
Once Part of the Wieden Home and Later Part of the Kuse Home**

Their few cows roamed the woods. In 1889, their yellow cow with a crooked horn, their other red cow and a red heifer looked for the best grass to eat. One day, they wandered too far and were lost!!! The loss was great and Mr. Wieden notified the Star News, asking for help in finding his cattle. Was he discouraged about trying to clear land and make a living in the woods? We do not know.

In the early 1890's, the Wiedens moved to Dorchester. A Dorchester history records that in 1892 William Wieden and son William built a four-story roller mill that could produce 75 barrels of flour a day. The mill was a wonderful operation, but tragedy again struck the family when the mill burned. A family named Bobbe rebuilt it. William and Ida lost the Medford farmland at a sheriff's sale in 1895. Their son William was married to a woman named Mary and the couple had seven children of whom only four survived. He apparently had a hall in Dorchester. He was listed on the census as a bartender and also had boarders. The senior William Wieden died about 1904 and his wife Ida died in 1910.

On December 11, 1897, the Medford property was sold to Cora E. Horr. On March 26, 1900, it was sold to E. D. Simerson. On July 27, 1918, it was sold to Joe Harris who owned the property until 1936. The Harris family used the land as cropland and the former Wieden buildings stood unused and in the way of farming operations.

Then the abandoned house and barn buildings found new uses. Walter Kuse, who was planning to be married, wanted to build a new home for his bride and himself on the Kuse farm just across the road. He obtained part of the Wieden house from Joe Harris, who owned the buildings. The Wieden cabin became the bedroom and kitchen on the front part of the Kuse house. It was added to a shanty that had been used for shelter on the property.



Shanty Portion of the Kuse House

Walter and Amanda Kuse, who were married in 1926, lived in the cabin together with Walter's mother Eleonore and daughter Hildegard until 1938.



Amanda, Hildegard and Walter Kuse in Front of Little House

Then the log house was sold to the Ted Steffens and moved to Second Street in Medford.



Kuse House Being Moved in 1938

Large hand hewn beams from the Wieden barn were used to construct framework in the new stone house Walter built for the Kuse family.



Beams from Wieden Barn Used in Kuse Stone House

The Wieden yard had a garden in which double pink shrub roses and red Jerusalem Cross plants bloomed. The roses were very hardy.



Jerusalem Cross



Wiedens' Rose

Though the Wiedens moved to Dorchester, the roses from their garden continued to grow along the roadside for the next hundred years until recent road and utility work finally eliminated them. Some descendants of those Wieden's roses still bloom in the garden on the Kuse property. One plant now also is part of the heritage garden on Medford's Main Street. For years, a tall, lone balsam fir stood near a stone pile and marked the place where once a family had hoped for a bright future. A maple tree still stands near the site along Allman Avenue.



**Balsam on former Wieden Place as Viewed from Kuse Property
c. 1946**



**American Elm and Maple on former Wieden Place as Viewed from Kuse Property
October 1960**



2013 January 26 – Property Where Wieden House Once Stood

Sources Used

Photos from the Kuse Farm Museum and Nature Preserve collection
Maps and land records
Taylor County Star and News

Written by Dr. Loretta Kuse and Dr. Hildegard Kuse