

**The Schornstheimer Dairy**  
**Corner of Church and Wall Street**  
**Town of Elmira**  
**1865 To 1980**  
**Scott W. Deming- Town Historian**

The Schornstheimer name in the Town of Elmira can be traced back to the early dairy farms in both the City and Town of Elmira. The first Schornstheimers to arrive in the area were Conrad Martin Schornstheimer and his cousin Peter Schornstheimer. Peter was born in Hesse Darmstadt, Germany. He came to the America in 1850 at 23 years of age and located in Elmira. Conrad arrived in America from Bodenheim, Germany around 1860 at 24 years of age. Many of the Schornstheimers living in the Elmira area can trace their roots back to Conrad or Peter.

Conrad Schornstheimer was born on January 6, 1836. He married his wife Frederika (Koop) in the old Grace Church (where the congregation of the German Evangelical Church worshipped prior to their new church being built) on Main Street. Their wedding was the first one held there. Conrad and Frederika had eight children. Their son Charles was born around 1869, daughter Ella born on Sept 9, 1873, son Edward born on June 28, 1875, son Harry born on June 23, 1880 (he married Eva Harvey), son William, daughter Elizabeth, daughter Rosey and an infant son who died young.

Shortly after his arrival in Elmira, Conrad became involved in dairy farming by managing several large farms including the Hoffman farm on Hoffman Street and the Foster farm on West Water Street in the City of Elmira. Conrad started his own dairy by purchasing the Hoffman dairy business about 1865. The dairy was located on the corner of Church and Wall Street where the Elmira Savings Bank West Elmira branch now stands. This land was adjacent to the original Hoffman farm property.

According to Dick Schornstheimer (Conrad's grandson and the son of Harry and Eva Schornstheimer) of West Elmira the original dairy property extended from Church and Wall Street all the way south to the river. Tobacco was raised on the property along the river and a tobacco shed behind the barn at Church and Wall St. was used to dry the tobacco. The southern end of the Schornstheimer property was sold when the dikes were built along the river.

For many years Church Street, west of Hoffman Street, ended at Wall Street and was called Schornstheimer Lane. It was renamed Church Street when the street was extended to "The Point" at Coleman Avenue in 1898 after Judge Hiram Gray's family sold a strip of land for the proposed extension beyond its end at Wall Street. Charles, Edward and Harry Schornstheimer took over the dairy when their father Conrad died on December 16, 1916. The dairy continued to operate for many years with the processing of milk at the dairy ending in 1953. The grocery store continued in operation by Robert Schornstheimer (Dick's brother) until 1980 when the property was sold to Elmira Savings Bank for the expansion of the West Elmira branch of the bank.

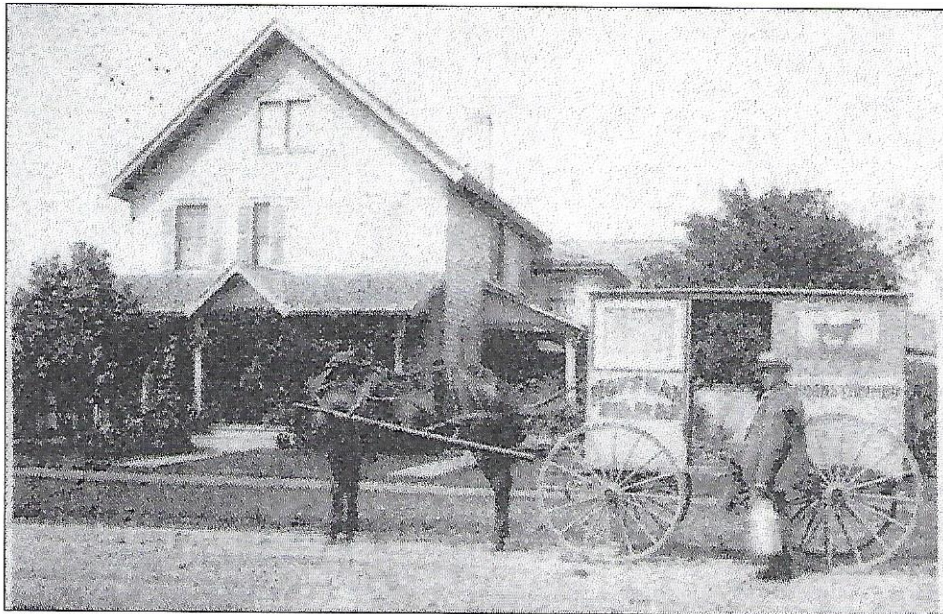
Ralph Hoskins of West Elmira remembers his mother going down Wall Street to the Schornstheimer dairy store to get a can of fresh milk, ice skating on the pond behind the old dairy barn and the dairy cows walking from the barn to the north end of Wall Street (which ended south of Clinton Street in those days) to go to pasture in the open field. Ralph still has a Schornstheimer Dairy milk box on his back porch.

Conrad's cousin Peter Schornstheimer married Christina (Stampf) (from his native town in Germany) on August 30, 1855. They had seven children. Their names were Henry, Fred, Peter Jr., Ella, Carrie, Kate and Lena. Peter operated the Schornstheimer-Stampf grocery store at the corner of Lake and Clinton Street in the city of Elmira for many years. Peter's son Fred eventually took over operation of the store. Peter died on December 27, 1914 and is buried in Woodlawn Cemetery.

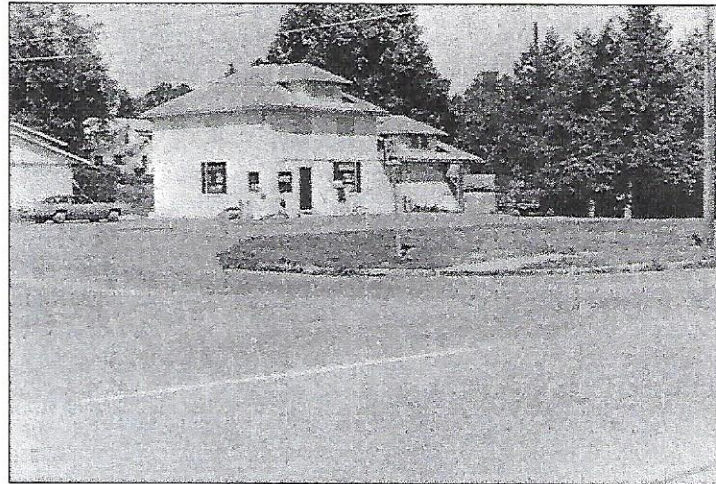
Conrad and Peter Schornstheimer were involved in the founding of the German Evangelical Church (now known as the First United Church of Christ) on Madison Avenue in the City of Elmira. The church was organized in 1874 and the building was erected in 1876. Many of the early baptisms and weddings at the church were connected to the Schornstheimer family.

Information for this article was taken from Dick Schornstheimer, Ralph Hoskins, Elmira Savings Bank, the Steele Memorial Library and its website, US Census Records, Our County and It's People by Ausburn Towner, Chemung County 1890-1975 by Thomas Byrne and various other internet websites.

**Writer's Note:** I continue to look for historic subjects (people, places, homes, historical events, old schools, family history, etc) about the Town of Elmira to write about. I am interested in doing an article on the old one room school house No.6 that was located on West Water Street just east of the point. If anyone has any information about the school please let me know. If you have any suggestions or information for future articles please e-mail them to me at [demingsw@yahoo.com](mailto:demingsw@yahoo.com) or call me at 607-732-1177.



Conrad Martin Schornstheimer- founder of the Schornstheimer Dairy with his horse drawn milk wagon used for delivering milk in the late 1800's. The sign on the wagon says Hoffman Farm and Schornstheimer.



The Schornstheimer Dairy store as it looked prior to the Elmira Savings Bank West Elmira Branch locating there in 1980.



The German Evangelical Church (now the First United Church of Christ) on Madison Avenue in Elmira.

