

Mr George Heinz Sr. and Katherine (Henlein) Heinz were among the first pioneers who came to America. They left Germany in 1839, crossing the ocean in a sailing ship. The voyage lasted ninety days. They landed at Baltimore, Maryland on August 5, 1839. They came through the St. Lawrence River to Chicago, and then down the Illinois River with a tow boat drawn from a long rope by a mule or oxen, and landed at what is now Peoria, IL.

George worked for awhile for Captain Moss at a point near Rome, IL. The first year George and Katherine received \$5.00 in money, with both of them working every day and boarding themselves. The second year both of them worked every day and boarded themselves and received as payment one cow and no money. After working a few years for Captain Moss, George farmed the Bradley farm on the West bluff in the city of Peoria for a few years. This was just opposite the main street.

Later, George purchased 160 acres of land on Section 16 in Kickapoo Township. He cleared the land for farming and built a log cabin. Later he made his own bricks and lime and built a handsome brick house. (The farm now owned by Martin Gensler.) All of their furniture was hand made. All of their cloth for clothes was hand spun. Georges first plow was a wooden mouldboard that cut a width of 20 inches, and was drawn by oxen. His first wagon was hewn out of logs and not a nail of iron was used in making the wagon. The wheels were sawed out of a log about three feet across and 8 or 10 inches wide. He drilled the hole for the axle in the wheel with a stone and for axle grease used soap. The pioneer farmers drove these wagons to Chicago and back with grain or dressed hogs, to get money, since Peoria was only a trading post then. It took six weeks to make one trip to Chicago and back. There were twelve wagons which was called a train, and each wagon was hitched by a yoke of oxen. At the end of one journey only one wagon remained because all the rest were worn out and several of the oxen perished on the way, since there were no roads, only trails, and no bridges to cross the streams.

George owned 320 acres of fertile land which he divided among his 5 sons. He was paralyzed the last ten years of his life.