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JOHN HENRY HEITMANN

Conrad Rochefort
History 300
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ABSTRACT

John Henry Heitmann was born in Germany in 1845. He came to the United States in the middle to late 1860s, setting up business as a grocer. In 1882 Heitmann married Matilda Lichtle. They had six children, one of which died in infancy. During his lifetime John H. Heitmann bought many pieces of property, living at one of his acquisitions for over thirty years. He died in 1918, leaving property mortgage debts totalling $16,000. Mrs. Heitmann died in 1923.
NOTE

While researching this paper, the name "Heitmann" was encountered with many different spellings. Among these were Heitman, Heidtman, Heightman, Hartmann, and Hertmann. Also, the name "Lichte" was spelt Lichti and Leichte. For the purposes of this report, "Heitmann" (with two n's) will be used, being the spelling used on final papers of the deceased and on the burial marker at their graves.
OCCUPATION AND BUSINESS TRANSACTIONS

John Henry Heitmann was born April 27, 1845, in Germany. Both of his parents were also born in Germany. He came to the United States in the 1860s. In his years here Heitmann dealt heavily in real estate. His first purchase was on May 13, 1869, when he bought Lot 31 Chatham Ward from John D. TenBroeck, the lot being located at Gordon and Tattnall Streets. The price paid for this property was $4200. Heitmann also assumed payment of an annual ground rent of $52.56 payable quarterly to the Mayor and Aldermen of the City of Savannah. The next day he signed a mortgage for the amount of $1700 with Mr. TenBroeck, to be paid back, with interest, on the same date of the next year. Heitmann fulfilled his obligation. In the census of 1870, however, Heitmann lists the value of his real estate at $4000, which is $200 less than the purchase price.

John Heitmann earned a living as a grocer in Savannah. His place of business was located on Jefferson Street in its first years. The Savannah City Directory of 1874 has John H. Heitmann and Company, grocer and saloon, located at Tattnall Street, southeast corner Gordon Street. This would be Lot 31 Chatham Ward. His place of residence is given as 54 Jefferson
Street.

In May of 1871 Heitmann purchased Lot 4 Middle Oglethorpe Ward from John G. and Luder Mehrtens. The purchase price was $2850.50. This lot is located at Pine and Farm (now spelt Fahm) Streets. This was the only piece of property Heitmann bought in the 1870s. Starting in May of 1874, Heitmann took the first of his three trips of the decade to Germany. He also made the journey in August of both 1875 and 1876. All the while he still maintained his grocery business on Tattnall Street.

When not travelling abroad, Heitmann romanced Matilda Lichté here in Savannah. She was born on June 17, 1857, daughter of Henry P. Lichté and the late Ann M. Lichté, both natives of Germany. Mrs. Lichté had died in 1875. Mr. Lichté operated a grocer at one time. John H. Heitmann and Matilda J. Lichté were married July 19, 1882, by W. S. Bowman, Pastor of the Lutheran Church in Savannah (later Lutheran Church of the Ascension). Less than a year later, Mrs. Heitmann left for a trip abroad.

Though not presently buying property, Heitmann was improving the property he already owned. The tax digest for Lot 31 Chatham Ward increased over 4000 dollars in 1884, from $5200 in 1883 to $9500 in 1884. Apparently Heitmann built some dwellings on the property at this time.

On January 13, 1885, Heitmann purchased Lot 50 Lloyd
Ward from Margaret Smith for the amount of $1610. Mrs. Smith apparently made some improvements to this lot in 1884, as she only paid $1500 for the lot in that year. Located at the southeast corner of Waldburg and Jefferson Streets, Heitmann paid Mrs. Smith $2000 of the purchase money, with the remaining $1610 to be paid along with seven percent interest per annum. Over two years later, on April 27, 1887, Heitmann finished paying the balance of the purchase money. The Heitmanns moved to this location in 1886, after living with Mrs. Heitmann's father for a year.

Mrs. Matilda C. Heitmann purchased the southern half of Lot 31 Berrien Ward from her father on March 23, 1889. The purchase price ended up being over $7000, as she agreed to pay her father twenty dollars monthly for the rest of his life. He died in June of 1892, having moved with the Heitmanns when they moved.

Before his death, however, the Heitmanns made other property acquisitions. Lot 14 in Southville (later known as Southville Ward) was sold to John Heitmann on June 12, 1891, his being the highest and best bid. The price paid by Heitmann was $210, and the property was purchased from Jordan L. Brooks, acting as administrator for Charlotte Small. In November of the same year, a John Heitmann purchased a store on South Broad Street (present day Oglethorpe Avenue) from Tom Stathis for $100. However, this may have been John F.
Heitmann or John H. Heitmann. At that time a John F. Heitmann ran a store at 32 South Broad. But the 1891 Savannah City Directory also lists a J. H. Heitmann at 48 Price, corner South Broad. Just over six months later, Heitmann bought three more lots in Southville. Lots 8-10-12 were acquired for the amount of $210 from Eldrin Geffcken, John N. Maupas, and Margaret S. Rahn on May 23, 1892. This area was obviously undeveloped, judging by the small purchase price.

February of 1895 saw Matilda Heitmann buy Lot 30 Chatham Ward at the price of $3930. Purchased from Louisa H. and Charles P. Connery, the property was subject to an annual ground rent of $38.44 payable quarterly to the Mayor and Aldermen of the City of Savannah.

Although no occupation or business address is given in the city directories, the 1900 census lists Heitmann as a grocer. No address is given for his place of business but his place of residence is listed as being in Lloyd Ward.

From 1901 to 1910, the Heitmanns were busy in real estate dealings, starting on March 18, 1901. On this day John Heitmann bought three more lots in Southville Ward. Purchased from Philip Sanders for $175, this acquisition pushed the Heitmann's total number of lots in Southville Ward to seven. The northern half of Lot 31 Berrien Ward ("Currytown") was purchased from Thomas Daniels for $3100 in August of 1903. Located at Taylor and Jefferson Streets, this gave the Heitmanns
complete ownership of Lot 31. On March 30, 1904, after the payment of $511.27, this being the net balance due, Lot 30 Chatham Ward was held in fee simple estate by the Heitmanns.57 On this same day, Lot 31 in the same ward was also made fee simple, after the payment of the net balance of $675.14.58 Just over a month later, John Heitmann bought Lot 32 Chatham Ward for $3450 from the firm of Youmans and Demmond, representing the Russell family in a pending court case.59 The Russells were asking for $4000 for the property in a public auction, but Heitmann's bid was the highest received.60 In September Heitmann received a $2000 loan, to be paid back in gold coin, from United States Mortgage and Trust Company of New York.61 Heitmann pledged Lot 50 Lloyd Ward and Lot 32 Chatham Ward against the loan, which was fully paid and cancelled on October 1, 1909.62 For the sum of $117.71, Heitmann bought the southern portions of four lots in Southville Ward on March 30, 1905, from the Mayor and Aldermen of the City of Savannah.63 Heitmann had purchased the northern portions of the lots some years back. Heitmann received an extension on March 23, 1909, on a loan taken out in May of 1904 with United States Mortgage and Trust Company.64 A five year extension was granted and the debt was paid by October 2, 1915.65 Heitmann also received a loan of $12,000 from The Oglethorpe Savings and Trust Company on July 2, 1910.66 This debt was not paid until September of 1920,67 over two years after Heitmann had died.68 Lot 7
Southville Ward was bought by John Heitmann for $597.75 from Mary C. Reppard on the twentieth of September in 1910. On March 15, 1912, Matilda Heitmann bought seven lots in Bacon Ward ("Grantville") for the grand sum of $14,000.80. Sold by William and Harry M. Lattimore, two small strips of land were included in the deal. Not quite a year later, John Heitmann paid $700 at a public auction for the eastern twenty-six feet of Lot 35 Middle Oglethorpe Ward. The property was acquired from Thomas F. Screven, sheriff of Chatham County, sold to pay the debts of Margaret C. Kinison. In May of 1913, Mrs. Heitmann bought six more lots in Bacon Ward, again purchasing the land from the Lattimores. This time the price was $5750. Eleven days later, on May 31, 1913, Mrs. Heitmann purchased thirty-two lots of land in Cann Ward from The Twelfth Street Land Company for the small amount of $3500. However, on the same day, Mrs. Heitmann borrowed $3000 from the same company. This deed debt was paid in full by February 2, 1916. John Heitmann received another loan extension from United States Mortgage and Trust Company in April of 1914. On August 25, 1914, Heitmann was loaned $7500, again by United States Mortgage and Trust Company. The debt was repaid in August of 1920, after Heitmann had already died.

John Henry Heitmann died June 13, 1918, without leaving a will. His obituary stated that he "died at a local
hospital after an operation.” His wife Matilda filed letters for the administration of his estate. An appraisement of his property holdings was conducted, with a total value of $38,950 being reached. However, Heitmann owed $16,000 in unpaid loans, $10,000 to The Oglethorpe Savings and Trust Company and $6,000 to United States Mortgage and Trust Company. By July of 1923, Mrs. Heitmann had cleared the estate of debt and the five surviving children of John Henry Heitmann divided the property of the estate.

Less than half a year after settling her husband’s estate, Matilda C. Licht Heitmann died. Cause of death was given as cancer of the uterus. Mrs. Heitmann left a will, made April 25, 1922, expressing, among other things, her wish to be buried in the family lot at Laurel Grove Cemetery, and for the family to erect a properly inscribed monument there for her and her deceased husband. An appraisement was made of Mrs. Heitmann’s real estate, with the total value placed at $59,200. Her personal estate’s value was estimated to be almost $28,000, with over $20,000 in cash deposited in the Citizens and Southern Bank. After the payment of outstanding debts against the estate, the net value of the estate of Matilda C. Heitmann came to $79,672.
CHILDREN OF JOHN AND MATILDA HEITMANN

John Henry and Matilda C. Lichte Heitmann had six children, three boys and three girls. The first of these children was born August 15, 1883, in Germany. Named Henry Fredrick, after his mother's father, he never married. Before retiring, he was a realtor. He died on August 11, 1961, at the age of seventy-seven. He is buried in Greenwich Cemetery, Lot 41, Block E, Section 11.

The second child of the Heitmanns was named Lena Alberta and was born September 23, 1886. From 1903 to 1913 she served as organist for St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church. On December 28, 1911, Lena Alberta Heitmann married Olin Franklin Fulmer. They were married by N. J. Epting, Pastor of St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church. The Fulmers had five children, all born between 1914 and 1923. Mrs. Fulmer died October 15, 1964, at the age of seventy-eight. She was a lifelong resident of Savannah and at one time was a teacher in the public school system. Her husband, who served as the mayor of Savannah from 1949 to 1955, died September 13, 1969, at the age of eighty-six. He was a native of Prosperity, South Carolina, and had been an insurance executive before retiring. He was cited for Savannah's progress during his administration and was called a "good mayor." Mr. and Mrs.
Fulmer are both buried in Lot 1, Block F, Section 11 of
Greenwich Cemetery.

John Henry Heitmann, Jr., was the third child of Mr.
and Mrs. John H. Heitmann. He was born October 6, 1888. In 1925 he was placed under the guardianship of Mrs. Alberta
Fulmer, his sister, after signing a lunatic will. He
never married, and, like his brother, was a retired realtor. Heitmann lived with his sister and died August 5, 1954, at the
age of sixty-six. He is buried in Lot 41, Block E, Section 11 of Greenwich Cemetery.

John Carson Heitmann was born January 25, 1892. They
married Laura Louise Lufburrow on July 4, 1924. They
were married by M. J. Bpting, Pastor of St. Paul’s Evangelical
Lutheran Church. He was a soldier in World War I and
was also a realtor. He died July 6, 1972, at the age of
eighty. He was cremated at the Southern Crematorium in
Jacksonville, Florida. His wife died December 4, 1973, at
the age of eighty-five. Her remains were sent to Hart’s
Mortuary in Macon, Georgia, for cremation. Mrs. Heitmann
had a daughter from a previous marriage. Evelyn Hazel
Lufburrow died at the age of sixty-seven in December of 1975. She
was single and was also cremated at Hart’s Mortuary in
Macon.

Helen Elizabeth Heitmann, the fifth child of the Heit-
manns, was born December 10, 1894. She married George F.
Zealy on March 29, 1923, in St. Paul’s Evangelical Lutheran
Church. M. J. Epting, pastor, performed the ceremony. Mr. Zealy died at the age of eighty on June 12, 1951. He was a native of Columbia, South Carolina, and was a retired auditor for the Central of Georgia Railway. Mrs. Zealy died less than a year later, on May 30, 1952, at the age of fifty-seven. Both Mr. and Mrs. Zealy are buried in Lot 12, Section R of Bonaventure Cemetery.

The last child of John and Matilda Heitmann was born on February 26, 1897. Named Matilda Charlotte after her mother, she was baptized May 19, 1898. She died the next day. The cause of death was given as congestive diphtheria. Also contributing to her death was malaria fever contracted ten days before diphtheria set in. She died at her parent's house at 223 West Waldenburg Street and is buried along with her parents in Lot 243 of Laurel Grove Cemetery.
ENDNOTES

1. Laurel Grove Cemetery, Lot 243.

2. The exact birthplace is uncertain. The 1870 and 1880 Censuses give Heitmann's place of birth as Hanover. However, in an interview with Mrs. A. Leon Holloman, a grandchild of Mr. Heitmann, it was learned that his birthplace was Rotenburg, near Bremen, in Germany.

3. 1900 Census—Savannah Public Library.

4. Alien Naturalization Records at the Georgia Historical Society show Heitmann arrived in New York from Germany around November 15, 1866. The 1900 Census lists Heitmann as being in the United States for thirty-five years. Heitmann's obituary in the June 15, 1918, Savannah Morning News states "he was born in Germany and came to this country fifty-nine years ago."—page 10 column 6.

5. Deed Book 4C Folio 620—Chatham County Courthouse—May 18, 1869.

6. Ibid.

7. Ibid.

8. Deed Book 4C Folio 616—Chatham County Courthouse—May 19, 1869.

9. Ibid.

10. 1870 Census—Savannah Public Library.

11. 1870 Census—SPL.

12. The 1871 Savannah City Directory lists Heitmann's address as 54 Jefferson. (page 191) The 1870 Savannah City Directory has him at 64 Jefferson, though this very well could have been a typographical error, considering the quality and accuracy of city directories in those days. However, this may not have been the John Henry Heitmann who died in 1918 as there was another John H. Heitmann who also was a grocer. (1870—page 89).

13. 1874 Savannah City Directory—page 95.

14. Ibid.

15. Deed Book 4K Folio 407—Chatham County Courthouse—May 16, 1871.

16. Ibid.
19. Savannah Morning News, August 23, 1875, p. 4, c. 2 and Savannah Morning News, August 2, 1876, p. 3, c. 3.
20. 1879 Savannah City Directory—page 258.
22. 1860 Census-SPL.
24. Ibid.
25. 1860 Census-SPL.
27. This is an assumption. The Savannah Morning News of May 3, 1883, lists a Mrs. Heitmann as a passenger on a ship bound for New York. (p. 3, c. 3) The Heitmann's first child is listed as being born in Germany. He was born in August of 1883.
29. This is the general assumption as to the large increase. Ward Book—GHS.
30. Deed Book 5F Folio 126—Chatham County Courthouse—January 13, 1885.
31. Ward Book—GHS.
32. Deed Book 5F Folio 126—Chatham County Courthouse—January 13, 1885.
33. Deed Book 6C Folio 285—Chatham County Courthouse—January 13, 1885.
34. Deed Book 5U Folio 286—Chatham County Courthouse—January 13, 1885.
35. Deed Book 6C Folio 286—Chatham County Courthouse—April 27, 1887.
36. 1886 Savannah City Directory—page 194.
37. 1885 Savannah City Directory—page 203.
38. Deed Book 6M Folio 244—Chatham County Courthouse—March 23, 1889.
39. Ibid.
40. There is a day's discrepancy in the date of death of Henry F. Lichtt. The records at the Chatham County Health Department have the date of death as June 2, 1892, while his tombstone in Lot 243 of Laurel Grove Cemetery has the date as June 1, 1892.

41. 1886 Savannah City Directory, page 415.

42. Deed Book 6Y Folio 377, Chatham County Courthouse, June 12, 1891.

43. Ibid.

44. Deed Book 7A Folio 451, Chatham County Courthouse, Nov. 18, 1891.

45. 1891 Savannah City Directory, page 104.

46. 1891 Savannah City Directory, page 101. J. H. Heitmann is also listed at 48 Price, corner South Broad in the 1893 Savannah City Directory in the street directory section. (Page 106) The 1893 directory is the last directory to give a business address for John H. Heitmann. (Page 106) In the name index J. H. Heitmann's address is given as 183 Waldburg, but the street directory has this location as vacant! Also, back in 1890, John F. Heitmann was co-owner of Precht and Heitmann, located at 48 Price Street. (1890 Savannah City Directory, page 110).

47. Deed Book 7D Folio 412, Chatham County Courthouse, May 23, 1892.

48. Ibid.

49. Deed Book 7L Folio 377, Chatham County Courthouse, Feb. 21, 1895.

50. Ibid. This was subject to a claim for $3500 to Charles D. Fisher. On February 23, recorded in Deed Book 7L Folio 375, the amount is listed as $430 and the grantor is given as Charles P. Connery, as administrator upon the estate of William Hone, deceased, and still subject to a claim of $3500 in favor of Charles D. Fisher.

51. 1900 Census, SPL.

52. Ibid.

53. Deed Book 8H Folio 157, Chatham County Courthouse, March 18, 1901.

54. Ibid.

55. Deed Book 8R Folio 159, Chatham County Courthouse, Aug. 19, 1903.
56. Ibid.

57. Deed Book ST Folio 235, Chatham County Courthouse, March 30, 1904.

58. Deed Book ST Folio 236, C. C. C., March 30, 1904.


60. Ibid.

61. Deed Book 8W Folio 435, C. C. C., September 30, 1904. This deed states that it is supplementary to the deed to secure debt dated May 4, 1904, which remains in full force and effect. I could not find this first deed. It was not listed in the grantor or grantee books for that period.

62. Ibid.

63. Deed Book 9A Folio 64, C. C. C., March 30, 1905.

64. Deed Book 9X Folio 22, C. C. C., March 23, 1909.

65. Ibid.


67. Ibid.

68. Laurel Grove Cemetery, Lot 243.


70. Deed Book 10Y Folio 60, C. C. C., March 15, 1912.

71. Ibid.

72. Deed Book 11F Folio 351, C. C. C., February 12, 1913.

73. Ibid.


75. Ibid.


77. Deed Book 11K Folio 144, C. C. C., May 31, 1913.
78. Ibid.

79. Deed Book 11th Folio 432, C. C. C., April 3, 1914. This is marked fully paid and cancelled on the same day as the deed recorded in Book 9th Folio 22. The wording on the deeds is identical and it is doubtful that Heitmann would owe exactly the same amount of money due the exact same day to the same company.


81. Ibid.

82. Laurel Grove Cemetery, Lot 243.


84. General Index to Wills, Estates, Administrations, Etc., Chatham County, Georgia, Volume 1 (A-K), page H-27, Georgia Historical Society.

85. Letter of Administration, Estate of John Heitmann, Chatham County Courthouse, 1918. The documents estimating the approximate wealth of Heitmann's estate varied. One totaled $27,150 and another total reached was $23,100. The City of Savannah Assessment for 1918 has the real estate worth $43,775 (not counting, of course, the $16,000 of debt).

86. Ibid.

87. Ibid.

88. Laurel Grove Cemetery, Lot 243.

89. Death Certificate, Vital Records, Volume 21, Chatham County Health Department.

90. Will of Matilda C. Heitmann, File 1167, Chatham County Courthouse, 1923.

91. Ibid.

92. Ibid.

93. Ibid.
94. Death Certificate, Vital Records, Volume 175, Chatham County Health Department. The place of birth is listed on the death certificate as Germany. Also, Mrs. A. Leon Holloman, a niece of H. Frederick Heitmann, has alien naturalization papers filed June 24, 1954, by him. His obituary states he had lived in Savannah for seventy-five years. However, the Census of 1900 lists his birthplace as Georgia.

95. Ibid.

96. Ibid.

97. Ibid.

98. Records at Greenwich Cemetery.


100. Ibid. The Records of the Lutheran Church give her birthdate as September 24, 1685. Her death certificate and tombstone have the date as September 23, 1886. Also, records of her daughter, Mrs. A. Leon Holloman, indicate the 1886 date is correct.


102. Marriage Records, Book X Folio 314, Chatham County Courthouse.

103. Ibid.

104. Parish Register, St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church.


108. Ibid.


112. Records at Greenwich Cemetery.

113. Death Certificate, Vital Records, Volume 135, Chatham County Health Department. Both John Henry Heitmann's death certificate and tombstone give his death of birth as October 6, 1888. Records of the Lutheran Church of the Ascension have the date as October 6, 1889.

114. Lunatic Will, John Henry Heitmann, File 1197, Chatham County Courthouse, 1925.


116. Ibid. His address is given as 524 E. Victory Drive, the same address as Mrs. Alberta Pulmer.

117. Records at Greenwich Cemetery.


120. Ibid.

121. 1918 Savannah City Directory, page 292, listed as a soldier.


123. Ibid.

124. Ibid.

125. Death Certificate, Vital Records, Volume 206, Chatham County Health Department.

126. Ibid.


128. Ibid.

129. Ibid.

130. Parish Register, St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church.
131. Marriage Records, Book 2M's Folio 75, Chatham County Courthouse.

132. Ibid.

133. Death Certificate, Vital Records, Volume 125, Chatham County Health Department.

134. Ibid.


137. Records at Bonaventure Cemetery.

138. Parish Register, St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church.

139. Ibid.

140. Ibid.

141. Death Certificate, Vital Records, 1898 Book 1, Chatham County Health Department.

142. Ibid.

143. Ibid.

144. General Index to Keeper's Record Books, Laurel Grove Cemetery, Volume Two (G-M), Georgia Historical Society.
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History of St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church, St. Paul's.

Interview, Mrs. A. Leon Holloman

Letter of Administration for John H. Heitmann, Chatham County Courthouse.

Lunatic Will of John H. Heitmann, Jr., Chatham County Courthouse.

Marriage Records, Chatham County Courthouse.

Parish Register, St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church.

Records at Bonaventure Cemetery, Bonaventure Cemetery.

Records at Greenwich Cemetery, Greenwich Cemetery.

Records of the Lutheran Church of the Ascension (Parish Register), 1823-1925, Georgia Historical Society.

Savannah City Directories, 1870-1918 (inclusive), Savannah Public Library.

Savannah Morning News, Georgia Historical Society.

Schreck Books, Chatham County Courthouse.

Tombstones, Bonaventure Cemetery.

Tombstones, Greenwich Cemetery.
Tombstones, Laurel Grove Cemetery.

Vital Records (Birth and Death Certificates), Chatham County Health Department.

Ward Books, Georgia Historical Society.

Will of Matilda C. Heitmann, Chatham County Courthouse.