

## ***Berg Blacksmith Shop***

*On January 15, 1879, John Haebig, with his wife Barbara, arrived in Marshfield, and purchased Lot 8, Block H. Born in Hearthen, Bade, Germany in March 30, 1838, Haebig began working in his father's blacksmith shop at Hearthen in 1859, and four years later he began his journeyman's experience which took him to jobs in Austria, France, Switzerland, and Wollenburg, Bavaria. Haebig and his wife immigrated to New York in 1865, and then came to Oshkosh, Wisconsin in 1868. Having built a profitable business in Marshfield, Haebig sold his original shop in 1883, and re-located north of the railroad tracks on Central Avenue. Here he labored until his retirement and later died in Marshfield on June 30, 1918.*

*On December 8, 1883, John and Barbara Haebig sold their house and his original blacksmith shop to Michael and Johanna Berg. The Marshfield Times, "Town News," December 15, 1883, reported:*

*"Jno. Haebig has sold his house and blacksmith shop to a new-comer for the smug sum of \$2400. Mr. Haebig has been in Marshfield for sometime and has been one of our best citizens."*

*Michael and Johanna Berg, with their four children, had recently sold their homestead in Liberty Township, LaBette County, Kansas. Born in Nittel, in the Rhineland of Prussia, on September 14, 1849, Michael Berg had been raised on the family homestead at Ashford, Fond du Lac County, Wisconsin. His parents had immigrated in the fall of 1850 to New York, and arrived at Ashford in November of that year.*

*In 1871, Michael followed other local German families to settle homesteads in Kansas. It is believed that Michael apprenticed as a blacksmith in Ashford, for it was reported that he operated a blacksmith shop and farmed while living in Liberty Township.*

*In 1885 Mike Berg sold the blacksmith shop {originally purchased from John Haebig} to Michael Bast. Berg continued to lease from Bast, and operate his business from this shop until it was destroyed in the fire of June 27, 1887. This fire leveled most of the original Village of Marshfield, also taking with it John Kohl's blacksmith shop.*

*On September 3, 1887, Mike Berg purchased Lots 9 and 10, Block 94, in the Village of Marshfield, from Simon Cournoyer. Here he built a large, two-story blacksmith shop with living quarters on the second floor. By 1900, Michael's third-oldest son, John L. Berg, began apprenticing in the shop, followed in 1902 by the fourth oldest son, Nicholas F. Berg.*

*Mike Berg continued active work as a blacksmith up to 1924, when he retired; he died on July 24, 1927. John and Nicholas took over operations in 1924, under the name of Berg Brothers Manufacturing Company, a venture which ended in 1927.*



*Blacksmith Shop built by John Haebig and sold to Michael & Johanna Berg in 1883.*

By 1928, John re-established his business as a wagon maker up on South Depot Street {where the police station now stands}, while Nick stayed at the blacksmith shop. John kept his wagon-making and wood-working business going until he lost it in a sheriff's sale in on January 8, 1935; Nick operated the blacksmith shop on Central Avenue up to its sale A.G. Sanders on October 3, 1941. John went on to teach woodworking and blacksmithing at City Point CCC Camp up to 1939 -40; he then went to work for Roddis Lumber and Veneer Company. He died on June, 1943. Nick re-located his blacksmith shop three miles north of town in McMillan Township, Marathon County, along Highway 97. He died on December 8, 1952, sixty nine years to the day that Johanna and Michael Berg purchased the blacksmith shop from John Haebig, to establish themselves in Marshfield.

Submitted by John L. Berg  
(for the Marshfield History Book, Vol. 1)

Note: In a city plat map found in the Marshfield Times & Gazette, May 2, 1885, the Blacksmith Shop of N. Berg was located in the same location of present day United Way (south half of building).

**Additional Notes:** In one of the Marshfield Times, immediately after the fire in July of 1887, it was reported that Nick Berg had a total loss of \$640 in building, tools and merchandise.



Second blacksmith shop of Michael Berg, Sr., located at 416 S. Central Ave., Lot 9, Block 94, built in September-October, 1887. In photo are Joseph Goldbach (on left) and Michael Berg, Sr. (second from right.) Others are unidentified.



Present day building on the location of N. Berg Blacksmith Shop of 1885.

### **M. Berg**

Every community supports a knight of the hammer and anvil, and M. Berg, whose shop is located on south Central avenue, may be said to be a prominent exponent of the local fraternity. He has been a blacksmith for 37 years, 19 of which he has spent in this city. He is well known to horse-owners in this latitude, and as a shoer has few equals in this section. He shoes from a scientific standpoint, understands a horses' foot, and is very correct in resetting shoes. In all lines of blacksmithing his work is equally satisfactory, and his prices reasonable. There is a workshop in connection, where all kinds of wagon and buggy woodwork and repairing is one

*and new work made to order. At present Mr. Berg employs three helpers. The attention of the farming community is called to the fact that he handles a full line of plows and discs. He has conducted his business with such skill and progress as to have developed a trade that is as commendable as it is well merited. For good work, reasonable prices and fair treatment give him a call.*

***(from the Marshfield Times, July 25, 1902)***

*M. Berg, blacksmith, wagon-maker and horse-shoer, with large shops on south Central Avenue, is one of the sturdy pioneers of Marshfield, always a public spirited citizen. Mr. Berg has been in business here since 1883 and is known throughout this section of the country as a very capable workman. He runs a large wagon-shop in connection with his forge and turns out some fine work in this line, manufacturing stone-boats and similar appliances for the local trade. Mr. Berg is a skillful horse-shoer and pays special attention to this branch of his business. Mr. Berg commenced business here the same year the city was incorporated, which gives this anniversary special significance to him. He has taken an active part in public affairs and served as alderman from the third ward for the term beginning in 1893.*

*(Marshfield Times, August 26, 1908)*

### **MICHAEL BERG**

*Michael Berg established his business in 1883 which he conducts at 416-418 South Central Avenue. He owns the buildings he occupies and is considered one of the most capable blacksmiths, wagonmakers and builders of auto bodies and delivery wagons in this part of the state, and his plant is equipped in a modern manner.*

*The plant is complete in every respect for the building of wagons and other vehicles, auto bodies of all kinds, etc.*

*A great deal of general repair work on all kinds of wagons and autos is done, and wagon and auto painting is also an important branch of the business. No matter what design of wagon is desired, Mr. Berg is in a position to build it in a substantial, satisfactory way and at the right price.*

*Despite his years Michael Berg is an active as ever and is daily attending to his business. He has a host of friends in Marshfield as well as outside our city. He conducts the oldest established shop in the city, and is one of the finest old gentlemen to meet in a business or social way.*

*(The Marshfield Times, April 19, 1916)*

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*If you have any additional information (including pictures) regarding this business or location, we would really appreciate you contacting us and sharing. We will add information whenever possible.*

*For questions, or for sharing additional information, please contact us at [schnitzl@charter.net](mailto:schnitzl@charter.net). Please include what story the information relates to. Attach your text information in the form of a word document, please no PDF's. Photos should preferably be in jpeg format.*

*For additional stories on the historical sights and businesses of Marshfield, visit our website at: <http://www.marshfieldgenealogy.com/QR-Codes-of-Historical-Marshfield.html>.*