

*franz*

### History of the Kippenhan Spinning Wheel

This wheel originally belonged to our grandmother, Louise Arnhoelter Franz. It was handmade in Wisconsin by Benjamin Franz, older brother of Louise's husband, August.

The shape of our wheel is unique. It was patterned after wheels used to spin flax. When used, a bundle of carded flax was hung from the top of the wheel from which one pulled strings and fed them into the spool as it rotated. It was probably patterned after the flax wheel because that was the kind Louise was acquainted with, and she undoubtedly gave the directions for making it.

It seems Louise Arnhoelter was what we today would call a liberated woman. She was a spinner and weaver and not only supported herself but also helped out her family. She would begin spinning sometime in the summer and continue until February 2nd, Candlemass Day. Reason I think so is because there is an old German saying that goes like this:

"Licht mess spinne vergess  
Und by tag zu Nachtess."

Translated. it means:

"Light mess, spinning forget *evening*  
and eat by day your ~~favorite~~ meal."

The saying says days were getting longer. After that day, Louise would put the spinning wheel away and began to weave.

Although wheels like Grandmother's were originally used to spin flax in the old country, here in America it was also used to spin wool, even in my day. As long as Grandma was able to, she spun yarn which we knitted into woolen stockings and mittens for the family.

-Hilda Kippenhan <sup>Dec</sup> → Bern 1890  
1978

*Jean Sommers' aunt - (My mother's 10 year  
old sister wrote this)  
A Sr. High teacher &  
Garden Club Pres & Business  
& Professional Women's President  
(in Appleton, Wis. for 43 yrs at least.)  
Taught*