

◆ BESANCON, INDIANA CHRONICLES ◆

Issue No. 12

GENEALOGY DEPT.

Winter 2000

History of Maples, Indiana by Gladys Nail Lomont

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The quiet little village of Maples, Indiana had its beginning in August of 1853 when it was plotted by **O. Bird** and **J. Bowser**. In its early days lumbering was the chief industry, along with stave and hub making.

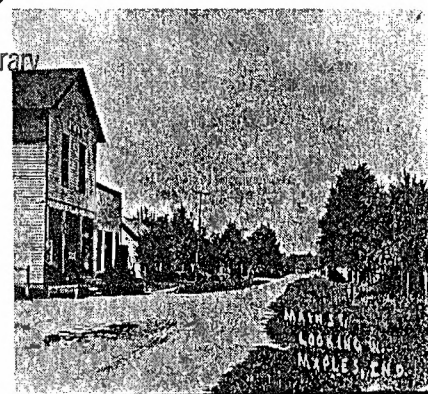
Lewis S. Maples, for whom the village was named, was born in Green Co. Pennsylvania and came to the small community in 1852 to take charge of an engine for a saw-mill. He engaged in making heading and staves which was connected with barrels. Later he became a farmer.

In 1880 the people there numbered 139. Today, one hundred and twenty years later, it is scarcely 100.

In its heyday, the place thrived with five thousand cords of wood made up into staves and heading each month. These were marketed mainly in St. Louis, Baltimore and New York, and forty men were being employed at this time. The Pittsburgh, Ft Wayne and Crestline Railroad provided efficient transportation to make these products available, which accounted for the town's prosperity in those days. The various phases of manufacturing received the attention and capital of many men from elsewhere in the county: the **Fitch brothers, Williams, Olds, Roberts, Bohyer** and **Cary** all had a hand in the various businesses and during that time the village of Maples was not so quiet a place, after all.

The first two stores were kept by **Adam Crawford** and **Nicholas Ldig**. Later, several other owners operated these same businesses. In May 1892, **John W. Nail** purchased and operated a general store for over thirty years. The store was truly a 'General Store' in every sense of the word.

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*General store and Post Office
owned by John W. Nail
Maples, Ind.*

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The Besancon Historical Society
15535 Lincoln Highway East
New Haven, Indiana 46774-9679

Gene Yoquelet, President
Barbara Gorney, Vice President
Carlton Giant, Treasurer
Theresa Martin, Secretary
Joyce Lomont Cowl, Editor of
Chronicles

Maples, IN (cont.)

The best coffee sold for twenty five cents per pound, and a yard of calico cost all of a nickel. Here you could trade anything from butter and eggs for the necessities of life, while hearing the latest gossip. This I remember, because the store belonged to my father and I spent many hours behind those counters!

To further serve the townspeople, there was the little one room school first made of logs, and later replaced by the brick one that was built in 1900. It was known as District No 7. It now makes a comfortable home for a family.

Then there was the corner saloon, as it was called, still in operation and it has played a part in the life of the town but not always to the liking of some of the early residents.

There was another large saw-mill, which made wagon fellows and hoops operated for some time before it was destroyed by fire. A large elevator did a thriving business for some time before it too was destroyed by fire in 1933.

This town can boast a big league ball-player by the name of **Parnell Hisner** who had a memorable career for about seven years. He was owned by the Boston Red Sox and also played for some of their farm clubs.

With the coming of the automobile, the usage of the railroad gradually faded and as can be expected with progress - this little town has changed; but it will always hold a special spot in the memory of many people of this community.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

How appropriate the title **Rev. George Mather** used for his book, "*FRONTIER FAITH*". The word 'faith' is used in so many types of expressions: faith in God, faith in my fellowman, faith of endurance, faith in undertaking an accomplishment etc. Our pioneer ancestors must of had a tremendous faith in God and in themselves for undertaking great journeys to far distant lands, and willing to make sacrifices to secure a better life in the the "New World". The first thing our pioneers desired to do to express their faith, and to provide a place of worship was to build a church. Rev. Mather wanted to preserve the history of Fort Wayne churches and in doing so acknowledge those who were mostly responsible. "*Frontier Faith*" is a book which future generations may read and become more knowledgeable in the history

I invite any person who is interested in these endeavors to join the society. The Besancon Historical Society is open to all who wish to preserve the history and genealogy of our early settlers of east Allen county.

Thank you,

"GENE"

MISSION of The Besancon Historical Society

ARTICLE II - SECTION 2:

The mission of the Besancon Historical Society of East Allen County is to preserve, interpret, and foster a deeper understanding of the history, heritage, and culture of the rural community know as Besancon, Indiana, generally located in Jefferson Township, Allen County, Indiana, and which has as its central focus, St. Louis Catholic Church.

Est.: 1994

Our Store: by Gladys Nail Lomont



Our store was truly a General Store in every sense of the word. We sold plow shares, harrows, garden tools, rock salt, twine, paint, besides groceries, meats, dry goods, (cotton material, thread and notions). kerosene, fencing and fence posts, farm implements, harnesses, horse collars and other items to numerous to mention. I was small enough when I started "keeping store" that I had to stand on a wooden box to reach the scales.

Many food articles came in barrels and needed to be weighed and sacked by hand - crackers, beans, dried prunes, apricots, dried fish in Lent, and sugar (white and brown and Coffee A). Many housewives preferred Coffee A to granulated, especially for baking cakes.

During Lent my dad always had boxes or kegs of smoked herring for the customers. Digging them out was not my preferred job. Vinegar came in barrels and people brought in their containers to be filled. Kerosene the same way. We had to be very careful when serving a customer who wanted kerosene, making sure to wash off all the smell before handling crackers or prunes.

We also had the post office. We sold stamps, money orders, and registered mail and we weighed and determined the parcel post on packages. When I worked in the post office a sealed letter required a two-cent stamp; postcards were a one cent. My knowledge in Arithmetic was put to good use in making change at the age of 10.

The bag was padlocked and taken to the railroad ticket office in time to meet the two mail trains, one going East, one westbound daily, except Sunday at the local Pennsy depot. This was one job that had to be done regardless of the weather or whatever! For many years the ticket agent was **T. J. Murphy**.

Behind the post office was a small drug store and patent medicine department. We carried such items as Green Mountain Oil for croup, Syrup of Pepsin, Fletcher's Castoria, cold and headache remedies and assorted other cure-alls'.

Most of the grocery items were shipped on the Pennsylvania railroad by freight. From the time I was about ten, it was up to me to haul these goods from the depot to the store. It was more a man's job than a kid's. Naturally, I piled the stuff high on the wheelbarrow so I would not have to make so many trips! Our store was a visiting place for local gossip, sporting events and you name it. men sat on nail kegs or whatever was available.

Tobacco came in huge blocks and had to be cut on marked lines. This was for chewing-ugh!

Folks brought their eggs and homemade butter to trade for other necessities. I remember it was my job on Saturday mornings to stay behind the big shoe counter to put the eggs in cases. There were cardboard partitions in layers of three dozen eggs

(continued on page 12)

PEPE GENEALOGY

Information submitted from the Besancon Historical Society Archives: Gladys Nail Lomont and Gene Yoquelet.

In this issue we continue with the **PEPE** family, which has long been associated with the Besancon area since about 1840. The previous issue of Besancon Chronicles profiled the MARC PEPE and AUGUST PEPE families; the subject of this article is **JOSEPH PEPE**. It is not known what the relationship is between Joseph and Marc Pepe. Their age difference is about six years which could very well make them brothers or possibly cousins.

Joseph Pepe (1788 - 1868)

Generation No. 1

1. **JOSEPH¹ PEPE** was born November 03, 1788 in France, and died December 26, 1868 in Allen County, Indiana. He married **ANNA COUTURIER**. She was born January 06, 1785 in France, and died May 12, 1865 in Allen County, Indiana.

Notes for JOSEPH PEPE:

The Joseph and Anna Couturier Pepe family resided in or near Arcey, Dept Doubs, France at the time of immigration to America. **Father Charles Benet** recorded 'birth records' of the couple's youngest children in Arcey.

The immigration records show PEPE, JOSEPH, native of France Co., Dept of Besancon, Fr., age about 46, arriving New York in April 1834. He became a Citizen of the United States on April 10, 1841. Witnesses: **LUCIEN P. FEVY** and **CHARLES DEROME**.

Joseph was first listed in the 1840 census of Washington Township (page 104, #1062, line 9). Land grant certificate # 3066 dated, June 10, 1834 list 347.66 acres in Allen County, Indiana for Joseph Pepe.

Joseph and Anna Couturier Pepe and family were communicantes of St. Vincent de Paul Catholic Church, Washington Twp., Allen County, Indiana and are buried at St. Vincent Catholic Cemetery.

Notes for ANNA COUTURIER:

The surname of "COUTURIER" is listed under the village of Echarquenant: Dept Doubs, France, in the "Courchaton Register" by Father Charles Banet. COUTURIER is the spelling found in the registers of baptism at St. Privat Church; Arcey, France noted by Father Banet in his research records.

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Children of JOSEPH PEPE and ANNA COUTURIER are:

- i. **FRANCIS² PEPE**, b: October 11, 1821, France; d: April 30, 1884, Allen County, Indiana; m: **CLAUDIA AUGUSTINE GAMET**, April 05, 1845, St. Vincent Catholic Church, Washington Twp., Allen County, Indiana.
- ii. **VIRGINIA PEPE**, b: Abt. 1823, France; m: **CELESTIN BERNARDIN**, April 05, 1842, Ft. Wayne Cathedral, Indiana.
- iii. **JOSEPHINE PEPE**, b: Abt. 1825, France; m: **PATRICK MEUNIER**, May 16, Allen County, Indiana.
- iv. **DANIEL PEPE**, b: Abt. 1828, France; m: **JOSEPHINE SORDELET**, May 16, 1850, Allen County, Indiana.
- v. **JEAN CLAUDE PEPE**, b: March 07, 1829, Arcey, France; d: August 22, 1830, France.
- vi. **LOUIS PEPE**, b: December 10, 1830, Arcey, France; d: October 08, 1908, Washington Twp., Allen County, Indiana; m: **MARY PETIGNEY**, May 05, 1856, St. Vincent Catholic Church, Washington Twp., Allen County, Indiana.
- vii. **FERDINARD PEPE**, b: March 11, 1833, Arcey, France.

Notes for FERDINARD PEPE:

Ferdinand is listed as "Frederick" in the 1860 census of Wayne Township, Allen County, Indiana..

QUERIES

Please send all queries to Gene Yoquelet, 15533 Lincoln Highway, East New Haven, IN 46774. Include as much information you have about the ancestor or ancestors you are researching.

FAMILY STORIES

Do you have a family story you would like to share? Perhaps a picture of long ago, or a letter written by a great-grandmother? Your connection to Besancon is interesting to all of us. Please send us your story or pictures! Gene Yoquelet, 15533 Lincoln Highway, East New Haven, IN 46774

Society Plans Trip

A trip to Besancon, France is being planned by the Besancon Historical Society's president, Gene Yoquelet. If you are interested in your "French" heritage and genealogy, this trip will acquaint you with the rural environment and people from the region that many of our ancestors came from. You will see and visit the rural areas of the "Jura section" of Switzerland, Belfort, and the rural areas of the Departments Haute Saone and Doubs, France including the Capital City of Besancon.

The departure date is **June 13, 2000** leaving at 6:00P.M. from Chicago nonstop to Zurich arriving at 10:15 A. M. The length of time on the trip will be almost two weeks. The initial cost of the trip will be approximately \$2400.00 per person. All commitments must be in by the end of February or earlier. For more details write the society, or call (219) 622-4067.

The Society is updating its records and has the following listed as Lifetime members. Please notify us of any corrections.

Joan E. Lomont Bail 117701 West 102 St Overland Park, KA 66214-2615

Michael Bowers 6414 Moore Road Monroeville, IN 46773

Barbara Lomont Broach 18 Reliez Valley Ct. Lafayette, CA 94549

Joyce Lomont Crowl 5036 Abbey Lane Shelby Twp., MI 48316

Catherine Dzurec 425 Columbia Road Valley City, OH 44280

Carolyn L. Hill 4418 E. Hillcrest Drive milton, WI 53563

Jeffrey R. Hoffman 1137 Straford Road New Haven, IN 46774

Monica A. Knecht 17117 Rorick Road Monroeville, IN 46773

Deborah K. Lloyd 2114 Carriage Hill Road Allison Park, PA 15101-3322

Tom Lombardi 300 West. Houston St. Garrett, IN 46738

Elizabeth A. Lomont 15412 Dawkins Road New Haven, IN 46774

Gladys Nail Lomont 4311 Girard Road New Haven, IN 46774

Jim Lomont 3606 Girard Road New Haven, IN 46774

Michael Lomont 5115 Girard Road New Haven, IN 46774

Theresa J. Martin P O Box 441, 102 Monroe Street Monroeville, IN 46773

Annette Lomont Raaberg 14350 - 20th Ave. San Francisco, CA 94122

"FRONTIER FAITH"

Author , Speaker: George R. Mather

The society was privileged to have as a guest speaker **Rev. George Mather**, the author of a fascinating story of Fort Wayne's first settlers of faith as they struggled to establish the first congregations, schools, orphanages and colleges in our northeastern Indiana. Rev Mather's book, "**Frontier Faith**", follows the history of religious life of all denominations, and covers the establishment of the two missions to the Native Americans and the fourteen congregations of early settlers in the Fort Wayne area between 1800 and 1860.

The book includes unpublished letters, original parish records, detailed diaries of the first missionaries to the Miami Indians and many reports from the first clergy to visit the area. Of particular interest to the Besancon area was the early life and history of **Father Julien Benoit** who became the second permanent Roman Catholic priest in Fort Wayne in 1840 and served as pastor of the community, establishing the longest tenure of any of Fort Wayne's clergy during the nineteenth century until his death in 1885.

Father Benoit was born in the mountain village of Septmoncel in 1808 of well-to-do parents. A brilliant student he completed his studies for the priesthood before he was old enough to be ordained. He was teaching at the Grand Seminary at Lyons when he met **Simon Gabriel Guillaume Brute de Remur**, the First Bishop of the Diocese of Vincennes, who was encouraging young clerics to come to the New World.

Benoit spent his first year studying English in Baltimore, and then was sent to mission stations in southern Indiana in April of 1837. When he arrived in Fort Wayne, he found a frame church, 35 by 65 feet, "rudely built, not plastered, with rough boards for benches," and a debt of \$4367. It is thought Benoit suggested St. Augustine, as the new patron saint of the church.

The church was completed under Father Benoit, and the debt paid off to the pride of the local Catholics. With a German-speaking assistant, the **Rev. Joseph de Mutzig Hamion**, Father Benoit's parish covered La Gro, Huntington, Columbia City, Warsaw, Goshen, Avilla, New France, New Haven, **Besancon**, Hessen-Cassel and Decatur. This meant riding as much as sixty miles for a sick call.

Father Benoit was homesick, but the bishop recognized what he called "the best priest in America", and refused to let him go. A brilliant man, Benoit knew if he was to fulfill his mission, he would need teachers. There were no Catholic schools in the area at this time, and in 1843 he was able to establish the St. Augustine Institute, with the help of the Holy Cross Brothers at Notre-Dame-du-Lac. By the fall of 1845, the school's enrollment had grown to eighty-four students, of whom fifty-four were boys, including four Protestants. A separate girls' school was established in 1846

There was a great deal of turmoil within the church at this time, and as Benoit struggled to keep his schools; he was left to his own resources. He was an amazing business man, realizing the value of land and coming from a family of wealth he was able to provide the schools and convent he was hoping to build. Assuring **Mother Theodore**, the superior of the Sisters of Providence that he would meet her conditions to provide for her sisters he was able to establish St. Augustine's Academy of the Sisters of Providence in 1846.

The school was an immediate success. By winter enrollment was up by one-third, and was judged the best in the state by the press. In just three years, a larger school was built, and the original building converted into a convent and a boarding house. From the beginning the school was self-supporting.

(continued on page 10)

ROUSSEY GENEALOGY

PIERRE LOUIS ROUSSEY (1793 - 1853)

Generation No. 1

1. **PIERRE LOUIS¹ ROUSSEY** was born August 24, 1793 in Bournois, France, and died 1853 in Jefferson Twp., Allen County, Indiana. He married **MARIE FRANCOISE NARBET** in France. She was born Abt. 1798 in France, and died March 14, 1858 in Jefferson Twp., Allen County, Indiana.

Notes for **PIERRE LOUIS ROUSSEY**: Immigration record - **ROUSSEY, PIERRE LOUIS** cec., 9/6/1847, native of France age 54y, embark Le Havre, France arrived New York, 7/7/1847. Allen County, Indiana. First listed in the 1850 census of Jefferson Twp., Allen County, Indiana - page 359 #1465 line 22.

Pierre Louis and Marie Francoise Narbet Roussey are believed to be buried under the main structure of St. Louis Catholic Church.

Children of **PIERRE ROUSSEY** and **MARIE NARBET** are:

- i. **FRANCOIS XAVIER² ROUSSEY**, b. Abt. 1824, France; d. August 31, 1881, Allen County, Indiana; m. (1) **MARIE VAUGIER**, July 26, 1853, St. Mary Catholic Church, Fort Wayne, Indiana; m. (2) **MARIE FRANCOISE MONNIER**, January 23, 1854, Fort Wayne Cathedral, Fort Wayne, Indiana.

Interment: St. Louis Catholic Cemetery, Besancon

- ii. **EUPHRASINE ROUSSEY**, b. Abt. 1827, France; m. (1) **JOSEPH AIME PROVERT**, July 20, 1848, Allen County, Indiana; m. (2) **JOSEPH COUR**, August 03, 1857, Allen County, Indiana.
- iii. **XAVIER FRANCOIS ROUSSEY**, b. July 28, 1828, France; d. 1897, Allen County, Indiana; m. (1) **MARIE GIRARDOT**, August 1847; m. (2) **MARIE ANNE JUSTINE BRAHIER**, December 28, 1856, St. Vincent Catholic Church, Academie, Fort Wayne, Indiana; m. (3) **JEANNE BAPITSTE ROSALIE BRAHIER**, 1862, Allen County, Indiana.

(continued on page 9)

iv. **CHRISTINE ROUSSEY**, b. 1830, France; d. March 11, 1893, Allen County, Indiana; m. **CHRISTIAN LADIG**, 1852, Allen County, Indiana.

v. **AUGUST ROUSSEY**, b. May 13, 1832, France; d. May 19, 1912, Allen County, Indiana; m. **FELICIA LUC**, September 11, 1862, St. Louis Catholic Church, Besancon; b. Allen County, Indiana.

Interment: St. Louis Catholic Cemetery, Besancon

vi. **JOSEPH ROUSSEY**, b. May 13, 1835.

vii. **MARIE CELESTINE ROUSSEY**, b. January 20, 1836, France; d. February 10, 1881, Allen County, Indiana; m. **BRICE BLANC (WHITE)**, May 21, 1855, St. Mary's Catholic Church, Fort Wayne, Indiana.

Interment: St. Vincent Catholic Cemetery, Washington Twp., Allen County, Indiana

viii. **FELIX ROUSSEY**, b. April 15, 1838, France; d. January 08, 1895, Allen County, Indiana; m. **ELIZABETH MARIE CONROD**, October 17, 1865, St. Mary's Catholic Church, Fort Wayne, Indiana.

Interment: St. John Catholic Cemetery, New Haven, Indiana

ix. **JUSTINE ROUSSEY**, b. June 06, 1841, France; d. August 07, 1895, Allen County, Indiana; m. **AUGUST BEUGNOT**, 1858, Allen County, Indiana.

Interment: St. John Catholic Cemetery, New Haven, Indiana.

NOTES:

MARIE JOSEPHINE ROUSSEY, born February 2, 1804 in Bournois, France was the daughter of **CLAUDE JOSEPH** and **M. JEANNE VERNIER ROUSSEY**. She married **JEAN BAPTISTE PAILLOZ** on January 7, 1832 in Bournois, France. A **JEANNE VERNIER** is listed in the household of **JEAN B. PAILLOZ** after the family came to America and settled in Oswego County, New York. It is a good possibility that Pierre Louis Roussey and Marie Josephine Roussey Pailloz are brother and sister. One would need to check baptismal and marriage records in Bournois for Pierre Louis.

Information submitted from the Besancon Historical Society Archives: Eugene Yoquelet

FAITH.....cont.

The tuition was set by Mother Theodore: "Catholics pay two dollars per quarter, of eleven weeks each. Protestants, three, four, five and even six, depending on the subjects they took." The school was the most successful of the missions of the Sisters of Providence.

It is also interesting to hear about the involvement that Father Benoit played with the establishment and building of what is known as the "German Catholic Church" or "**St. Mary's Church.**"

In 1849 a devastating cholera epidemic struck Fort Wayne. When the first cases appeared in the city Benoit offered the Academy as a temporary hospital and the services of the sisters as nurses. An interesting account appears in the book of this terrible time of our city's history, and explains the beginning of St. Joseph Hospital..

Another priest with ties to Besancon, was the **Reverend August Bessonies**, the pastor at St. Augustine who began his duties in 1853. He was an energetic man, and saw the construction of the building of **St. Louis Church** at the growing community of French Catholics at **Besancon**.

Mr. Mather devotes a section of how Julian Benoit seems to have encouraged an expression of French culture in the parish life. Since his arrival in 1840 he had ministered to new French, who had arrived in great numbers during the early 1840s, had settled north and east of town; most were from eastern France, Franche Comte', Alsace, and Lorraine, and did not identify with the old families of French-Canadian heritage. These principal settlements were **Besancon** and Academie (later termed "New France").

The listener discovers how Benoit's campaign to build "the most biggest, most beautiful church in Indiana"; **The Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception**, and how he was able to finance it. Benoit was the co-architect with Thomas Lau, he had supervised the construction; he had

personally raised \$46,000 from donors in New Orleans and elsewhere. Some felt most of money came from his own pocket. Year after year Benoit continued to give his money away to the Church and to the poor. On his deathbed he was quoted as saying "I came into the world with nothing, and I want to go out of it with nothing".

Rev Mather includes in his book a section entitled "The French Congregation", and here again **Besancon** is mentioned. This part of the book explains the two settlements of Academie, at first called the French Settlement of Pichon" and later named "New France"; and the second was Besancon, named after that prominent city from which so many had emigrated. Arcola also had a cluster of French families.

Whatever your heritage or your religion you will benefit from this book. From the skyline of Fort Wayne to the farm land of Monroeville, from the towers of the Cathedral to the steeple at Besancon, you will find "**FRONTIER FAITH**" a wonderful addition to your personal library

About the author: George R. Mather is a native of New Jersey, where he graduated from Princeton University and Princeton Theological Society. He has served as a Presbyterian pastor in Fort Wayne since 1971, and has written and lectured extensively on the early religious history of the region.

Contributing to this article: Sue Kratzman, Gene Yoqulete, and Joyce Crowl..



This photograph is the family homestead of **August and Caroline Celena Grosjean Pepe**. The house was built in 1881 and is located a short distance east of St. Louis Church on the Lincoln Highway. The house was completely restored by the present owners: **Brian and Tracey Lomont Jacquay**.

Photo courtesy of Gladys Nail Lomont



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New Haven, IN 46774



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In this issue: A history of Maples, Indiana by Gladys Nail Lomont

OUR STOREcont.

*"I fell asleep on
the dry goods
counter with 2
bolts of calico for
a pillow"*

I had to be careful not to break the eggs and at the same time to keep accurate count. As a rule the customer knew exactly how many eggs she brought in.

When my Dad had work on the farm till late in the evening my Mother took over the store together with taking care of the children and many a night I fell asleep on the dry goods counter with 2 bolts of calico for a pillow.

When we opened the storeroom door, we would be greeted with a rich blend of smells such as kerosene, twine, harness, and even chemicals like blue vitriol.

In the winter it was always very cold in the store; our only heat was a big coal-burning stove in the center of the building.