

# Besancon, Indiana Chronicles

Issue No. 6

March 1998

## President's Message

On behalf of the Besancon Historical Society I want to express my sincere thanks to all those who made voluntary contributions to the Society. We appreciate your continued support for the Society's activities.

In a future issue of the Chronicles, the Society would like to publish a list containing the names and addresses of the Society's members. Please inform the Society if you do not want your name included on this list. We would also appreciate receiving your e-mail address if you have one. If you want the surnames you are researching included on the listing, please send those along as well.

*E. E. "Gene" Yoquelet*

The path taken by many original French settlers to reach Allen County has interested many genealogists. Most of the original settlers to Allen County came to the area from French settlements in neighboring states--with the largest contingent originating in the French communities in Stark County, Ohio. This issue features another link in the chain and focuses on a French settlement in Pennsylvania

which has ties to French families in Indiana. The author is a Pennsylvania genealogist who has done extensive research on the Pennsylvania French.

This issue also contains an article pertaining to a visitor from Besancon, France.

The first contest sponsored by the Society appears in these pages. No prizes but an opportunity to show off what you know!

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The Society maintains a web page at:

<http://www.ipfw.edu/ipfwhist/historgs/besanco.htm>

Allen County Public Library

MAR 26 1998

GENEALOGY DEPT.

## Frenchtown, Crawford County, Pennsylvania

by Annette L. Lynch, M.A.

The village of Frenchtown, Crawford County, Pennsylvania and the neighboring crossroads of Petite Mondon (now Pettis Corners) comprise one of the eastern-most links in a chain of French settlements stretching from Pennsylvania to Indiana. French immigrants began trickling into the contiguous townships of Randolph, Mead, East Fairfield and Wayne in 1828--only fractionally later than those at Louisville in Stark County, Ohio. They continued arriving in a steady stream for the next twenty-five years.

Like the Ohio and Indiana settlers, nearly all of these immigrants came from the areas of eastern France formerly known as Alsace-Lorraine and the Franche-Comté. Most came from the modern departments of Haute-Saône and Doubs and the Territory of Belfort (formerly a part of Haut-Rhin.) A significant, but smaller, number came from the area of the Meuse River Valley in the northern departments of Meuse and Meurthe-et-Moselle.

Why these immigrants came to northwest Pennsylvania is open to conjecture. Much of the unsettled land in Crawford County--several hundred thousand acres--was owned by the Holland Land Company, a group of Dutch investors who received the land as payment for debts owed by the federal government following the American Revolution. The Holland Land Company advertised extensively in Europe to encourage immigration by extolling the good farmland, forests and abundant game in the area. It is certainly possible that this advertising was seen or heard of by the earliest French immigrants. Recruitment "campaigns" by recently arrived friends and family would have then provided the enticement for later immigrants.

Contrary to popular myth, most of the French who came to northwest Pennsylvania in the first half of the nineteenth century were not escaping religious persecution, political oppression or imminent military conscription. They were looking primarily for economic opportunity and a chance to have more here than they had had in France. Many were skilled workers and craftsmen--stone cutters, masons, weavers, locksmiths, tailors, saddlers, carpenters, blacksmiths, and distillers. The opportunity to own their own farm, however meager, apparently beckoned to all of them. Even when unexpected hardships were encountered, most did not regret their choice. They missed family members left behind in France but not the economic conditions. In 1847, one immigrant wrote home that, "Comme vous me faites savoir le misère qui règne en France par la cherté [cherté] des denrées, je plains amèrement, mes malheureux compatriotes, et je vois que malgré mon infortune...je suis encore plus heureux que d'avoir resté en France." [When you tell me about the misery which reigns in France because of the high price of food, I sympathize, my unfortunate compatriots, and I see that in spite of my misfortune...I am still happier than had I stayed in France."] <sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Letter from Claude Joseph Champagne of Frenchtown, Pennsylvania to his brother-in-law Frédéric Guillemin of Gouhelans, Doubs, 13 May 1847, copy in possession of author.

Whatever their origins or reasons for emigrating, the Frenchtown settlers were united in their devotion to the Catholic Church, and the establishment of a parish was one of their earliest endeavors. Oral tradition reports that St. Hippolyte's came into being as a parish in 1833. However the diary of the Rt. Rev. Francis Kenrick, Bishop of the Philadelphia Diocese, which then encompassed the entire state, refers to the commencement of work on a wooden frame church in 1837 and records the blessing and dedication of St. Hippolyte's on 15 August 1838.

The parish was served by visiting priests for several years until a resident pastor was assigned in 1842. By 1845 St. Hippolyte's boasted a congregation of 400 French, 140 Germans, and 60 English and Irish--a good many more than the twenty-three French families found by Bishop Kenrick on his first visit in 1834.

In 1846 SS. Peter and Paul was established as a mission church at Pettis, some five miles distant. It served another group of approximately fifty French and Swiss immigrants.

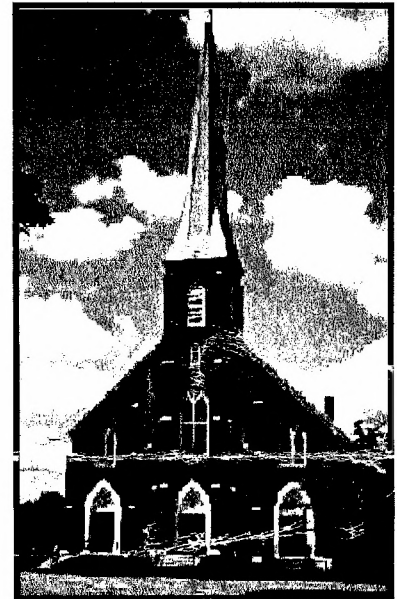
For most of the immigrants community life centered around the family and the church--its feasts and solemnities, rites and rituals. Footloose, adventuresome young single men were rare among the first generation of immigrants. The settlers came as families, usually young to middle-aged men with their wives and children. Many were tied by blood or marriage to larger extended families, and those who were not were frequently bound as tightly together by ties of locality.

Although the French settlers in Crawford County might have initially been isolated by language and customs from their English and German neighbors, they apparently remained in fairly close contact with the French communities in Ohio and Indiana. A family might easily have had members and/or former neighbors in French settlements in all three states. Contact between Frenchtown and Louisville, Ohio appears to have been regular and steady--something not surprising given the relatively close physical proximity of the two settlements. Interaction with the Indiana communities was perhaps less frequent overall, but certainly extensive in some families.

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The Prenats of the tiny village of Villars-le-Sec, Territory of Belfort, were typical of those families whose members became widely dispersed in the New World. The Prenat family originated with RICHARD PERRENAT, who died in 1682 in Beaucourt, Seigneurie of Delle (now the Territory of Belfort). By 1710, the name had been truncated to Prenat, and the family had relocated to Villars-le-Sec, where they remained until America beckoned.

JACQUES PRENAT, who was born in 1785, emigrated with his third wife MARIANNE RESET (of Chavanne-le-Grands) and their six children in the Spring of 1829. They settled near Louisville, Stark County, Ohio, where they were gradually joined by several children from Jacques' second marriage. Their family was further enlarged by the arrival, on 25 April 1833, of Jacques' younger sister MARIANNE PRENAT, her



**St. Hippolyte Church,  
Frenchtown, Pennsylvania**

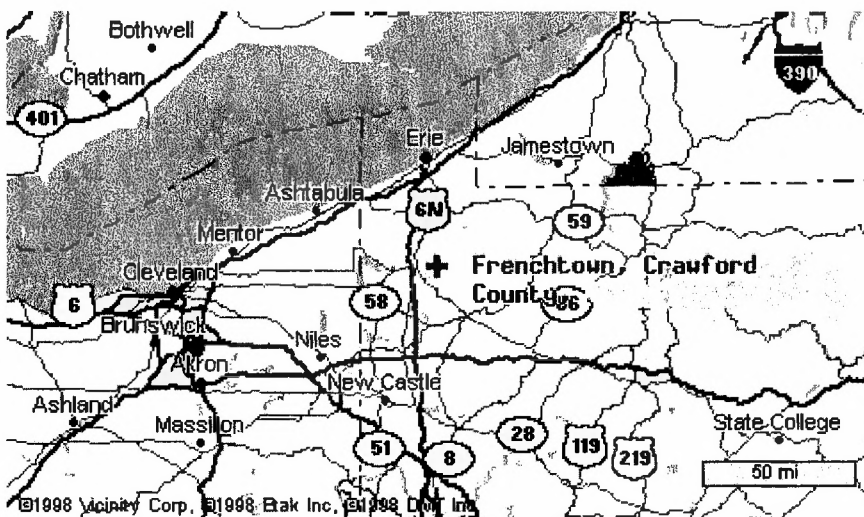
This church was built in 1888  
and was designed by local  
architect Joseph Brenat.

<http://www.toolcity.net/~sthippo/sthippolyte.html>

husband MICHEL NAGEOTTE of Voujeaucourt, Doubs, and their five-year-old son LOUIS NAGEOTTE, along with Michel's brother and sister-in-law FRANÇOIS JOSEPH NAGEOTTE and MARIANNE BIDAUX of Croix, Belfort.

By 1836, however, "Jacob," as Jacques Prenat was now known, had moved to the Frenchtown area in Crawford County and was soon followed by the Nageotte brothers and their families. Since Frenchtown had no resident priest at that time, at least one Nageotte infant was returned to Louisville for baptism at St. Louis Church in the dead of winter, 1841.

In the meantime, Jacques' children by his second wife MARIE FRIDEZ of



Lebetain, Belfort, had established independent lives. His son PIERRE PRENAT married and remained in Stark County; he resided in Freeburg, Washington Township, until his death in 1881. He left all his property to the Bishop of Cleveland in trust for the Catholic church at Strasburg (now Maximo). In 1848 Jacques' second son PIERRE FRANÇOIS PRENAT, after marrying in Pittsburgh and living for several years in Ohio, relocated his family to Madison, Jefferson County, Indiana, where he eventually became a wholesale grocer and liquor dealer.

Pierre François Prenat was not, however, the first Prenat to have journeyed west to Indiana. Jacques' younger brother JEAN JACQUES PRENAT, his wife Françoise (a distant Prenat cousin), his five children and his father-in-law left Villars-le-Sec in the winter of 1845. Bypassing family in Pennsylvania and Ohio, they migrated directly to the "French Settlement" in New Albany Township, Floyd County, Indiana, where they purchased land in the spring of 1846.

The last of the Prenat family to emigrate from Villars-le-Sec arrived in New York on 2 December 1846. Jacques' oldest son PIERRE FIDEL PRENAT, child of his first marriage to MARIE JEANNE BRON of Faverois, Belfort, came with his Swiss wife ANNE MARIE LCHAT and their many children. This group settled near Frenchtown, Pennsylvania with their relatives and seemed disinclined to venture further west. Arriving on the same ship with Pierre Fidel's family, however, was another young Prenat cousin CONSTANT PRENAT. He didn't follow Pierre Fidel to Crawford County but continued on to New Albany, Indiana.

Tracing the extended family a bit further, we come to JEAN NICOLAS DEMAISON, son of JEAN NICOLAS DEMAISON and FRANÇOISE NAGEOTTE (Michel Nageotte's cousin). Jean Nicolas arrived with his parents and siblings from Voujeaucourt, Doubs, on 9 July 1833 and spent his young adulthood in Frenchtown, Pennsylvania. As an adult, however, he traveled to Indiana where he entered the Congregation of Holy Cross at Notre Dame du Lac on 15 February 1853. As Brother Adrien, he professed his final vows on 5 August 1856 and remained in the order until his death.

Other French families with ties to both Pennsylvania and Indiana include the JOSEPH PORCHET family from Belfort (1828), which managed to include New York state in its peregrinations; the MOULINS and HEIDETS from Romagny-sous-Rougemont, Belfort (1828 and 1837<sup>2</sup>) who touched Pennsylvania, Ohio, and Indiana; the four DIDELOT brothers from Ugny-sur-Meuse, Meuse (1833-1834); the family of PIERRE FRANÇOIS CAYOT (1842) which also had ties to all three states; PIERRE COEURDEVEY (also known as Peter Hart) and his wife (1843); VICTOR SAVAGEOT and family from Uzelle, Doubs (1844); CYRIL LAURENT and family, also from Doubs (1847) and ANTOINE JOSEPH PERREY of Valonne, Doubs (1853).

#### General References:

Barcio, Rev Robert G., Ph.D. A Cathedral in the Wilderness: A History of the Diocese of Erie, 1853-1920. Erie, Pennsylvania: Diocese of Erie, 1991.

History of Crawford County, Pennsylvania. Chicago: Warner, Beers & Co., 1885.

Letter from Claude Joseph Champagne of Frenchtown, Pennsylvania to his brother-in-law Frédéric Guillemain of Gouhelans, Doubs, 13 May 1847. Copy in possession of Annette Lynch, Meadville, Pennsylvania.

Poux, Paul T. A History of the French Settlement in Crawford County. n.p., 1988.

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#### Document from the Past

*Following is the full text of the letter quoted in the article on Frenchtown. It and other letters were provided to Annette Lynch by Mme. Bernadette Bouchu of Paris. While it was written by a French immigrant to Pennsylvania, the experiences it recounts were probably similar to those of many immigrants. The original is in French. The writer Claude Joseph Champagne of the village of Gouhelans, Doubs, his wife and children sailed from Havre on the brig "Ark" and arrived in New York on 7 June 1846. They immediately joined Joseph's brother Jean Claude Champagne and his family, who had emigrated to Crawford County six years earlier. Joseph purchased 114 acres in Fairfield Township and began to settle in. His wife died unexpectedly of fever just three months after they arrived. Joseph was left to care for four young children under the age of ten. This letter was written the following spring to his brother-in-law Frédéric Guillemain at Gouhelans and is one in a series of letters written to France between 1846 and 1853. See "Letters Home," Crawford County Genealogy XIV, 2(Fall/Winter 1991).*

Meadville, May 13, 1847, Feast of the Ascension

My very dear brother-in-law,

If I delayed until now in answering your letter of January 24, it was because of my farm. I have leased half to a frenchman from the Dept. of Haut-Rhin who is a neighbor of my brother. I received your letter on April 11,

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<sup>2</sup>One group of Moulins and Heidets, already interrelated in France, arrived in 1828, and a second group of Heidets and Moulins came in 1837.

Casimodo Sunday, with the money order for \$72.00. My dear brother-in-law, I cannot put into words my appreciation for all that you have done, but it will be engraved on my heart for the rest of my life. You told me in your first letter, dated Oct. 26, that you would like to know about my farm. We have a little more than 50 acres of farm land, 50 acres of woods, some parts of which have been cleared, at least 15 acres that we cannot farm. When the children are a little stronger, we will farm it. The land is good. Finally, we have 40 acres of good quality. All of these are approximations, because I have not measured them. At present, our farm is sown with oats, the spring wheat was sown the last day of April and the first day of May, the corn and the potatoes were sown towards the 20<sup>th</sup> of this month, and, finally, the buckwheat about the 15<sup>th</sup> of June. The sowing time is much later than at Gouhelans. Winter is very long. We have had frost until the first of May. At present we have very favorable weather. Our spring wheat is already up and beautiful to see. We have seven acres of its sown, and we have 10 acres of oats. I furnish the seeds and share with the tenant farmer. It is necessary that I do this, since my children are too young, and me, it is necessary that I keep house. I cannot cultivate our farm. I sold our young oxen and a young cow in January. I sold them for \$44.00 the three, in paper [money]. We have paper money like that of France. We do not see much silver except a few small pieces but one receives paper. I lost on the sale of the oxen. I sold them too cheaply because I did not know the going price. In a month the price had risen by a fourth....The buyers go from farm to farm and buy the animals which suit them. I have left only two cows ready to calve and a \_\_\_\_\_. I tell you that in our orchard there is not such a large crop of apples as last year. There are about half of the trees which have few blossoms, and the other half are in good bloom. We have 118 feet of trees. If we have only a fourth of the apples of last year, we will have enough because there were two-thirds of the apples which would have stayed under the trees, except that we had three pigs who were pastured in the orchard and ate only apples.

At present, let us talk about the customs of the country. Americans are extremely inclined toward luxury. You do not see an American traveling on foot. They do not go without a wagon or a horse. They have strong and robust horses. The clothing is the same as in France. We see daily before us pass 15 or 20 wagons, and from 10 to 12 \_\_\_\_\_, from men to women, on horseback who go to Meadville, the ladies with beautiful hats with veils and pretty dresses. When you see them, you think them to be duchesses, but they are as poor as I am. A long time ago, when they first began to settle in America, 50 years ago, that is to say, in the early years of the country, there was nothing but woods. As far as they cleared the land, they fenced in 5 or 6 acres. Today they still do the same thing. That is why all is enclosed, large or small, as soon as the trees are cleared. They split the oaks for fences, and the rest is burned on the spot. As for their plows, they have no wheel. That is how you harness your oxen behind your plough. There is a 4' long board with an iron gadget at the end where you hook the chain for the oxen. The flange is cast iron, just as all the rest. The fork is in two pieces. the plow supports itself in the rings made on purpose in cast iron. When you press down on the fork, the plow leaves the ground and when you raise it, the plow enters the ground, exactly opposite from how it is done in Gouhelans, and the oxen are yoked by the neck. You put the yoke on the neck of the oxen, and, with two wooden rings...that you pass under the neck of the oxen, and they fit into two slots on the yoke with a little wooden key, and, there, the oxen are harnessed.

You tell me about the misery which reigns in France because of the high price of food. I sympathize, my unfortunate compatriots, and I see that in spite of my misfortune of having lost my dear wife, which was the hardest thing in the world, I am still happier than had I stayed in France. Look at the price today of the food/produce where we are--wheat sells for 3 francs, 10 sous; rye, 38 sous; corn, 35 sous; oats, 18 sous. I bought 20 measures for seed at 18 sous. I bought on the 6<sup>th</sup> of this month at Meadville 100 pounds of good

grain at 20 sous per pound. See the difference in the price of supplies from those in France. Our measure is larger than the ancient measure of Rougemont and a little less than the new.

You desire to know about our situation today. My dear brother-in-law, I tell you that my children are very well and that hypolitte will go to the English school on the 15<sup>th</sup> of this month to learn English, which will be very helpful for us at all times. We talked to the Americans and we cannot make ourselves understood, which is disagreeable for us. When my health gets a little better, if I am not inconvenienced by a hernia which I have had for the past twelve years in France, which did not bother me like it does today. I think that the sickness which I had is the cause. This is all that I have to tell you at the moment.

I tell you again that the sending of 400 francs [which you were] obliged to send me will be well used. I [went] to draw them two days ago from a banker in Meadville. Note well all the expenses which you go to for me. At the end, you do not lose anything with me, because if I learn that you lose anything over me, that will cause me much pain, for having been so good to me. I was distressed last year when I accidentally learned of our poor cousin Marie Champagne's burned arms.

Goodbye, my dear brother-in-law and sister-in-law, as well as my nephews and nieces. I embrace you all, as well as my mother-in-law, my brothers-in-law Jean Baptiste and Jean François, our good Champagne relatives and all of their family.

My children join me in sending love and affection. Your devoted brother, Champagne.

You will let me know at the end of the year how things have been, if things go well.

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### Did You Know?

- That there are at least twenty communities in the United States called Frenchtown. In addition to the Crawford County Frenchtown, there are three more communities in Pennsylvania with that name (Lycoming, Pike and Luzerne Counties). There are also Frenchtowns in Alabama (Jefferson County), California (El Dorado and Yuba Counties), Indiana (Harrison County), Maryland (Cecil and Somerset Counties), Michigan (Oceana and Marquette Counties), Missouri (Washington County), Montana (Deer Lodge and Missoula Counties), New Jersey (Hunterdon County), Ohio (Darke and Seneca Counties), Rhode Island (Kent County), and South Dakota (Pennington County).
- That there are at least twenty communities called Paris.
- That there are at least eighteen communities called Louisville.
- That there are at least nine communities called Versailles.
- That there are at least four communities called Belfort.
- That there is only one Besancon!



## Frenchtown, Pennsylvania Area Surnames

*The following list of names from the Frenchtown, Pennsylvania area has been provided by Annette Lynch. Her address appears at the end of the list.*

Alzingre	Bourgeois	Considère	Fénit	Jeanney	Mason	Piquard	Toillon
André	Bourne	Contois	Frelin	Jeannin	Mercier	Pié	Triboulet
Arnault	Bourquin	Cottenet	Froidevaux	Jeunet	Midot	Poly	Urbain
Bailey	Brenoël	Coeurdevey	Galmiche	Jouilliard	Monnin	Porchet	Vautrot
Belandret	Brenot	Crave	Gandillot	Jourdet	Montagne	Poupeney	Vejus
Balizet	Bron	Curtit	Gigogne	Karleskind	Morel	Pourchot	Venger
Bandelier	Cayot	Demaison	Girard	Laibe	Maurel	Poux	Verain
Barbier	Caillot	Devillars	Girardat	Lambert	Moulin	Prenat	Vernier
Bardey	Chalot	Devillard	Gollier	Lamboley	Nageotte	Rebrassier	Vincent
Barthelemy	Champagne	Devoqe	Grosclaude	Laurent	Noël	Richard	Voisin
Berly	Chardet	Didelot	Grosjean	LeComte	Parisot	Roche	Wenger
Besançon	Chevalley	Doubet	Guenin	Lippert	Patingre	Rochelandet	Yoset
Beuchat	Chottin	Dubail	Guenon	Loichot	Pauthier	Roueché	
Bideaux	Claude	Duchanois	Heidet	Lopinot	Pequignot	Roussy	
Bidaux	Clausse	Ducray	Henry	Lyoty	Perret	Savageot	
Bobey	Clère	Duplanti	Jacoulet	L'Huillier	Perrey	Schennenberg	
Bohin	Cogneville	Dupont	Jacquard	Mailliard	Perron	Schoeffel	
Bonnot	Comtesse	Echenoz	JeanBlanc	Maire	Pettit	Theubet	
Bourdon	Conreaux	Faivre	Jeannerat	Mannet	Picard	Theuret	

**Submitted by:**

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**Meadville PA 16335**

**email: all\_lynch@hotmail.com**



## A Visitor from France by Theresa Martin

*This is a condensed version of an article that Society member Theresa Martin prepared for a local newspaper.*

On an evening last November, Agnes Hart, Principal of St. Louis Academy at Besancon, was working late at the school. She heard the front door open and then footsteps on the stairway. She assumed that some parent or friend had entered the school, and she left her office to greet the visitor.

She encountered a well-dress gentleman. He introduced himself as Mr. Georges Jeanney. He showed Agnes his credentials and explained his purpose for being at the school. Mr. Jeanney told Agnes that he was a native of Besancon, France and CEO of DIMECO, a machine and tool business in Besancon. He had just attended "Fabtech 97" in Chicago and was en route to Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania and Bloomfield, Connecticut. He had been told by someone in Chicago that there was a community named Besancon in Indiana, and he could not resist the urge to determine whether this place really existed.

Mr. Jeanney expressed an interest in the history of the area, and Agnes arranged a meeting between Mr. Jeanney and Society member Ralph Violette who provided Mr. Jeanney with materials pertaining to the history of the area. Agnes also invited Mr. Jeanney to return to the school the following day for a classroom visit and Thanksgiving play.



Photo courtesy of Georges Jeanney

Upon his return to France, Mr. Jeanney arranged to have an article published in a Besancon newspaper L'Est Républicain about his experiences in the "other" Besancon. Mr. Jeanney has since become a member of the Besancon Historical Society--the Indiana one!

# BESANÇON

INSOLITE

## « Besançon Indiana USA » : ça existe !

*Following is a translation of the article which appeared in L'Est Républicain. It has been translated by Veronique Carpio for the Besancon Historical Society.*

## “Besancon Indiana USA”: It Exists!

Pernin, Roussel, Dodane, Lomont, Faivre, Girardot... Such a roll call could have happened in any school in the Franche-Comté. But it's taking place in the heart of the United States--in Indiana, close to Fort Wayne, between Chicago and Columbus, in a little town called....Besancon. While attending "Fabtech 97," a Machine and Tool Show in Chicago, Mr. Georges Jeanney, CEO of DIMECO, learned that 450 km away, in Indiana, natives of Franche-Comté had built a town during the early nineteenth century. They named it Besancon.

*"But," explains Mr. Jeanney, "the person I was speaking to thought that the little town had vanished. I wanted to be sure in my own mind, so I rented a car to drive over there. As a matter of fact, this town really still exists, and its school 'Saint Louis Academy' counts about one hundred children ranging in age from 4-9!"*

*"I was welcomed by Agnes Hart, a teacher who invited me to attend her class the next day. They were expecting me. The children were dressed in Indian costumes. They introduced themselves; most*

*of them had Franc-Comtois names. In my honor they sang Indian songs in front of a mural that depicted the arrival of pioneers."*

### A Town founded in 1846

Besancon children are going to be delighted to welcome such visitors, since the Americans of today are eager to rediscover their roots. The Franche-Comté from which Mr. Jeanney comes is actually the region of France from which their ancestors came. While speaking with Aurele Violette, an Indiana historian, Mr. Jeanney learned that most of the parishioners of Saint Louis (the name of the local church)...were natives of the Franche-Comté. Their great-grandparents arrived between 1830 and 1870, driven by famines and revolutions, but above all encouraged by Catholic missionary priests already settled across the Atlantic, who promised them an idyllic life. It was far from reality; after three months at sea and a two or three month journey across the land, either by way of the Mississippi or Ohio Rivers or over roads, pioneers settled in an hostile environment they had to tame.

### Courageous Expatriates

...they dried out and cleared the land; they transformed the area into a rich farming country which provided the opportunity for some to become wealthy. In 1840, they erected their first church built of logs. They named it St. Louis and called the parish "*New France*." ....

The convent of the Sisters of Saint Agnes and the school were built in 1898. The first [immigrant]

elected to the lower house of the Indiana Legislature was the Comtois Francis Gladieux. Another Comtois Charles Louis Centlivre founded the "French Brewery," the largest beer brewing company in the Midwest. He set up the most popular amusement park in the region.

If they still have typical Comtois names, the Americans of Besancon have lost all notion of the French language. Nevertheless, they are eager to make contact with their French "cousins," and Mr. Jeanney's trip is already bearing its fruits.

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### Miscellany

The Society has received notification that the 24<sup>th</sup> International Congress of Genealogy and Heraldry (24<sup>e</sup> Congrès International des Sciences Généalogique et Heraldique) will be held in Besancon, France between 6 and 11 May in the year 2000. The congress has been organized under the patronage of Jacques Chirac, the President of the French Republic. For information about the congress:

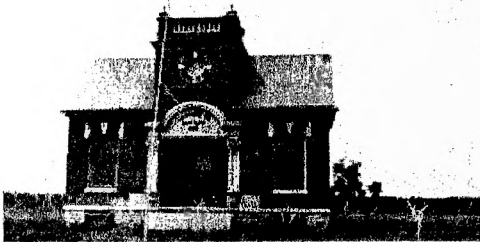
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25000 Besancon, France  
FAX++33 (0)3 81 50 58 14  
Email: [cegfc@besancon.net](mailto:cegfc@besancon.net)

In the Fall of 1997 it was decided by the Society to update and amend the by-laws. A by-laws committee was formed. The following volunteered to serve on the committee: Arlene Curts, Theresa Martin, Carlton Giant, Barbara Gorney, and Terri Gorney. The committee met twice in late 1997. John Harris of the Indiana Historical Society was contacted for his expertise in society by-laws and Indiana state law. John was extremely knowledgeable and helpful. Some articles of the by-laws needed to be changed to be in accordance with Indiana law. The new by-laws were approved by the committee and the Society officers on January 31, 1998.

Margaret Hahn, a lifetime resident of the Besancon area and a member of the St. Louis Besancon parish, passed away several years ago. Her genealogy collection was donated by her niece Karen Hall to our Society. Among items donated were two pictures of the St. Louis Besancon Church, both exterior and interior. The pictures were taken in September 1890. The exterior picture shows the original brick of the church; the interior picture shows the beautiful murals which once adorned the walls behind the altar.

## The Very First Besancon Historical Society Contest!

The following photographs were taken in 1927 of several schools in Jefferson and Jackson Townships. Can you identify them? Send your answers to Ralph Violette, 5523 Trishlyn Cove, Fort Wayne IN 46835. There are no prizes, but the names of those who correctly identified the photos will be published in the next issue of the Chronicles. You can identify them by LOCATION AND THE TOWNSHIP or by the NUMBER OF THE SCHOOL AND THE TOWNSHIP. Good Luck!



#1



#2



#3



#4



#5



#6

**Renewal of Membership/ Application for Membership**

**(Please print)**

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Street or Box No.:** \_\_\_\_\_

**City:** \_\_\_\_\_ **State:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Zip:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Please check one of the following:**

☐ **Renewal**    ☐ **New Membership**

**Check one of the following categories and enter amount on line at right margin.**

☐ **Individual membership**    \$10.00 per year

☐ **Family membership**    \$15.00 per year

☐ **Life-time membership**    \$100.00

☐ **I am already a life member. Please verify my membership.**

**I would like to send a gift membership to the person named below. (Enter the name and address of the person in the space below and enter \$10.00 on the line at the right margin.)**

**I would like to make an additional donation to the BHS in the amount of** \_\_\_\_\_

**TOTAL** \_\_\_\_\_

**Please make your check payable to the Besancon Historical Society and mail, along with this form, to:**

**The President  
Besancon Historical Society  
15533 Lincoln Highway East  
New Haven IN 46774**

