



## THE WESTRICK FAMILY OF ALLEN AND PAULDING COUNTIES

By Rev. James W. Lothamer, PSS

My grandmother Theresa Susan Westrick, born in Payne, Ohio in 1884, married Charles “Oliver” Lothamer (1874-1957) of Besancon in 1901. Theresa’s parents Franz and Agnes Westrick lived in Payne but many of their descendants now live in and around Allen County, IN. Thus I believe that my researches into my large Westrick family, which has several branches, will be of interest not only to the Besancon Historical Society, but to many others of your locale. My suspicion is that all of the Westricks of Allen County and their numerous offspring are descended from Franz and Agnes.

My hope is that this article can clear up misconceptions and inconsistencies about Westrick genealogy that your readers might come across.

The internet has made research somewhat easier. However, I have discovered that many of the trees on ancestry.com have multiple errors, due in large part to researchers simply reproducing the research of another person, without checking out or properly interpreting the relevant documents. For instance, there are three separate Westrick families that settled in Ohio. Ours originated in the counties of Seneca and Huron and later Paulding. The other two are centered in Defiance and Cincinnati. These three groups of Westricks, as far as I can determine, are completely unrelated to each other. However, several trees on ancestry.com have confused our Westricks with those others, especially those from Defiance.

Our Westricks are from the Pfalz region of Germany, today the state of Rhineland-Palatinate. At the time when Westrick family members came over, this area was controlled by the king of Bavaria. Hence, in the census reports and other documents, our ancestors are said to be from “Bavaria”. In many ancestry.com trees, one finds our Westricks listed as “Germans from Bavaria”, or in words to that effect. That is quite misleading and makes a big difference because the name of our small town of Brücken, where Franz Westrick of Payne, Ohio was from, can be found, in several places in Germany. To state that he was from “Brücken, Bavaria” may thus confuse the reader into looking for a Brücken in Bavaria. The fact is, the place should be listed as Brücken, Pfalz or Brücken, Rhineland-Palatinate.

However, in Pfalz there are two Brückens: one, Brücken bei Kusel, and the other, Brücken bei Birkenfeld. Ours is Brücken bei Kusel. Confusing the two Brückens in Pfalz is another frequently made mistake found on ancestry.com. Why am I so certain of this? Because I have the church book from Brücken bei Kusel and the history book from this Brücken. One has the birth record of our Franz—the other has the date of his emigration.

### Background: The Three Branches of Our Westrick family

On an accompanying **page 5** is a tree of our Westrick family. First note that the name was originally “Westrich”. In an English speaking country, many of the German names ending in “ch” got changed to “ck”. For our name to go from Westrich to Westrick reflects a typical change in pronunciation that happened well before World War I.

*President's Message ... Barbara Gorney*

While volunteering at the main library, I came across a book that had newspaper articles written in 1872 by John W. Dawson. John came to Fort Wayne in 1838 at the age of 18. In 1872 he decided that people, places and events should be recorded. Thus the articles written for the Daily Sentinel appeared.

In the one sketch he wrote how the French influenced this area by naming the rivers and creeks with a French name and how the meaning became lost through the years. This is one instance of the French heritage that can be seen in this area.

“A name appeared on the old Allen County map, published in 1860 by R.J. Skinner Middleton Strobridge & Co. and intended to indicate a creek which takes its rise in Springfield Twp. and flows through Scipio Twp., across the line between Indiana and Ohio and into the Maumee River. On the map it is written in plain letters “Mary Delome.” These French explorers attempted to give names to streams, villages, settlements and prairies. Hence the creek known as Mary Delome was distinguished by its marshy character and the abundance of the elm tree. The French gave it its appropriate appellation—Marais, meaning swamp and de lorme elm. Written in one term is Marais de Lorme or Elm Swamp Creek.”

In Paulding County, Ohio today it is called Marie de Lorme. Everyone thought it was the name of a person even though no one by that name was ever discovered. Only a few years ago was it found that it meant Elm Swamp. Finding this article helped to justify the meaning.

*Charcoal Sketches of Old Times in Fort Wayne*  
Copied from the Daily Sentinel March 8-May 20, 1872  
Transcribed in 1939

*BARBARA*

*Continued from page 1:*

On the tree, (**page 5**) you will find three branches to our Westrich family. Branch I was from Brücken, Pfalz (or Rhineland-Palatinate) and Branch II was from Kaiserslautern, Pfalz. Brücken is about 30 miles west of Kaiserslautern. In between is the huge American airbase at Ramstein, Germany. Branch I is not related to Branch II. They are simply two different families with the same last name.

However, look closely at Franz Westrick's parents. As you will see, his mother was Elizabeth from Branch I and his father was Johann from Branch II. *Hence, we, the descendants of Elizabeth and Johann, are related to the Westrichs of both Branch I and Branch II.* I have therefore called our branch the "Cousins to Both" branch. In a future article, I will return to Branches I and II. Suffice it to say that *there were significant migrations to the U.S. from all three branches, which means that we the descendants of Franz Westrick have a lot of Westrick shirt-tail cousins here in the U.S.* However, let me first turn to my attention to Branch III, the "Cousins to Both" branch, which is of immediate interest to your readers.

### **Westrick Branch III Emigrations**

#### **The "Cousins to Both" Branch**

Franz Westrick's parents were Elizabeth Westrich from Branch I and Johann Westrich from Branch II. Neither left Germany. However, of their 10 children, 3 came to the U.S.: Johann, Franz, and Anna Maria, all in the early 1850s, but separately. All initially settled in Huron Co., adjacent to Seneca Co., Ohio, where their cousins on their mother's side had settled. They were all from Brücken and so knew their mother's relatives quite well. Whether they ever knew their father's relatives or had any contact with them is not known.

The first of our immediate family to emigrate was **Franz** himself, alone, at age 19, arriving in New York from le Havre aboard the *Duchesse d'Orleans*, in April **1852**. Franz seems to have gone immediately to Huron Co., Ohio, next door to the county where his cousin Johann (Branch I) had settled. He married Agnes Ritter in 1861, at St. Sebastian's church in Sherman, Huron Co. They lived mostly in Sherman until 1883/84, when they moved to Paulding Co., settling right on the Paulding/Allen County line, adjacent to three Lothammer farms. Franz and Agnes were the parents of 12 children, the last two - Susan Teresa and Eva- being born in Benton, Paulding Co.

The second to immigrate was Franz's brother **Johann** or John as he was called here, arriving in February **1853**. John settled in Sherman Township, Huron Co., as had his brother Franz. There he married Elizabeth Riker in 1858 and Catherine Schaub in 1863. There were no children by either. Dying in 1879, he left a modest estate to Catherine, later buried with him in St. Sebastian's cemetery.

Finally, their sister **Anna Maria** arrived in **1854**, traveling with 4 other single people with the last names of Stamm, Bauer and Lavo. She went to Sherman Township, Huron County, where her brothers had settled. In 1855, she married Peter **Didion** at St. Alphonsus church in Huron Co. Information on Anna was crucial in figuring out where our Westricks were from.

Originally, we found her name recorded for her marriage to Peter Didion in Huron Co., Ohio, but, at the time, we had no idea who this “Anna Maria” Westrich might be. Loretta Gerber, an early researcher for the Westricks, located a Peter Didion in Billings, Christian Co., Missouri. However, the grave marker for Peter’s wife read: “Anna Maria Gattin of Peter Didion”. So it was assumed that this was a different Peter Didion and that this particular Anna Maria was not a Westrick.

However, due to Loretta’s persistence, she finally got access to Anna Maria’s burial record and discovered her maiden name was “Westrich”. “*Gattin*”, we learned, was not a last name but German for “*wife*”. The tomb stone was an interesting mixture of German and English!

The grave maker also gave her birth date and stated that she was from “Brücken”. That was the “smoking gun” that gave us the Westrich village of origin. Once we had a copy of the Brücken church book, we were able to identify Anna Maria by her birth date (exactly as on her tomb stone) and account for all of the Westrichs from both Group I and Group III. In addition, we were able to trace the Westrich parentage back a couple of generations further.

Anna Maria (1830-1905) and Peter (1832-1918) had 7 children, and moved early on to western Pennsylvania and then to Billings, Christian Co., Missouri. Peter and several of his sons worked as blacksmiths and established several foundry businesses. The family did quite well. Over the decades, one of the foundries morphed into a series of very large enterprises, today spread throughout the south. *To Be Continued in next Issue. . .*



Rev. Fr. James Lothamer’s Grandparents: Teresa S. Westrick & Charles O. Lothamer

**Branch I  
Brücken Branch**

Peter Westrich  
ca. 1759-1843

wed  
ca. 1783

Magdalena Blee  
1757-1829

not all children listed

Jacob\*  
1784-1806

Margaretha Huber\*  
Ca. 1780 - 1849

**Westrich**

1. Margaretha
2. Elizabeth
3. Johann / John\*  
m. Maria Krupp
4. Anna Maria\*  
m. Jos. Michael Host
5. Margaretha\*  
m. Sebastian Amend
6. Catharina\*  
m. Simon Kumpf
7. Barbara
8. Theresia  
m. Ludwig Eiswirth  
Two Eiswirth sons emigrated\*
9. Jacob\*  
m. Catherine Fay/Fey

**Branch II  
Kaiserslautern Branch**

Heinrich Westrich  
ca. 1764 - ?

wed  
ca. 1785

M. Johanna Mosmann  
1770 - ?

not all children listed

Johann Westrich  
ca. 1794 - ?

Bernhard\*  
1804-1869

Elizabeth Katharina\*  
1809-1880

Kath. Marg. Klein\*  
1813-1875

Franz Hemm\*  
1808-1903

**Westrich**

1. Maria
2. Jacob
3. Elizabeth
4. Nicolas
5. Elizabeth
6. Johann / John\*  
m. E. Riker & C. Schaub
7. Anna Maria\*  
m. Peter Didion
8. Franz\*  
m. Agnes Ritter
9. Heinrich
10. Margaretha

**Westrich**

1. Catherine\*  
m. Anthony Meyer
2. Jacob\*
3. Elizabeth\*
4. Nicholas\*
5. Barhard II\*
6. Philip\*
7. Carolina
8. Elizabeth (b. US)  
m. Leo Dietler / Deedler
9. Lena Mandana (b. US)  
m. Albert Uplegger

**Hemm/ Hem**

1. Mary Ann\*  
m. Peter Axel Peterson
2. Elizabeth (b. US)  
m. Gabriel Schlotter
3. Francis Jacob (b. US)
4. Jacob "Franz" (b. US)
5. Caroline (b. US)  
m. Calvin Anderson
6. Marg. Catherine (b. US)  
m. Job. S. Stephenson

**Branch III**

The "Cousins To Both" Branch  
Cousins to Both Westrich Family I and Westrich Family II.

\* emigrated to the United States

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**Thank you to the following Members for their Donations:**

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**To the Cemetery Fund:**

Audrey Jean Roy

Thank you to Fr. James Lothamer for his family's story which also tells of the perils of the study of genealogy! **To be continued in the next issue.**

MISSION OF  
THE BESANCON HISTORICAL  
SOCIETY

ARTICLE 11 - SECTION 2

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

Established 1994

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[BandTGorney@aol.com](mailto:BandTGorney@aol.com)

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[NOLAN1014@aol.com](mailto:NOLAN1014@aol.com)

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*Yester-Year.. . . .copied and submitted by Jane Morow*

### **Martin Reunion**

Ft. Wayne Sentinel, July 11, 1918

The third annual reunion of the Martin family was held Sunday at the country home of Mr. and Mrs. Charles P. Roy, eight miles north of Fort Wayne. The gathering was an all day affair, with 151 descendants of the Martin family in attendance. In the afternoon a program was given, followed by a short address by Rev. Joseph Lynn, of Academy.

Another event of the afternoon was the dedication of a service flag with eight stars for the following boys: Clarence Martin, Chas. Martin, Maurice Martin, Cletus Fox, Louis LaCroix, Thomas Kahough, Albert King and Otto Gigax.

The fourth reunion will be held at the country home of Joseph Bobay on the Auburn road, July 27, 1919. The election of officers resulted as follows:

President, Joseph Martin; vice president, J.M. Bricker; secretary, Mabel Roy; treasurer, Julian Martin. Those present were Mr. Delphos Martin, Mrs. Jane Bobay, Mrs. Mary LaCroix, Mr. and Mrs. Julian Martin, Mr. and Mrs. Frank Martin, Mr. and Mrs. Henry Martin, Mr. and Mrs. E.V. Gushman, Mr. and Mrs. A.E. Martin, Mr. and Mrs. Charles P. Roy, Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Martin, Mr. and Mrs. Charles Fox, Mr. and Mrs. Frank Bobay, Mr. and Mrs. George Martin and children, Delphos, Harry, Gerry and George; Mr. and Mrs. A.C. Roy and daughter, Ruth; Mrs. Mary Bricker, Mr. and Mrs. Ed LaCroix, Rev. Joseph Lynn, Mr. and Mrs. J.C. Delagrange, Mr. B. F. Garman, Mr. and Mrs. Willard Faulkner and children, Clara, Verda, Dorothy and Williard; Mr.

and Mrs. William Martin and children, Alice, Beatrice, and Billy; Mrs. S. Surfus, Mr. and Mrs. Edward Schrader and children, John and Maurice; Mr. and Mrs. Victor Sordelet and daughter, Crystal; Mr. and Mrs. August Guillame and daughter, LaVerne; Mr. Edward Roy; Mr. and Mrs. George Hardisty, Mr. and Mrs. William Bauman and children, Evelyn and Paul; Mr. and Mrs. A.J. Nomina and sons, Martin and Julian; Mr. and Mrs. William Blume and children, Virginia and Elmer; Mr. and Mrs. Jesse Hand and children, Willie, Kenneth and Ruth; Mr. Joseph Bobay, Mr. and Mrs. Leon Martin and sons, Carlton, Rolland and Leslie; Mr. and Mrs. Adalore Carl and children, Hazel, Martin and Wanda; Mr. and Mrs. S. Novick, Mr. and Mrs. Frank Roy and children, Dorothy, Wayne, Jessie and Francis; Eliza Carroll, Mr. and Mrs. Hubert Martin and daughter, Priscilla, and Mr. and Mrs. Harry Bricker and son, Jack. The Misses Alice, Edith, Viola, Margaret, Francis, Bernice, Kathryn, Garnet, Jualita, Gladys and Mildred Martin, Beatrice, Edan and Marie Bricker, Margaret Fox, Mabie, Velma and Hilda Roy, Grace, Ethel and Myrtie Faulkner. Irene and Louise Delagrange, Clotilda and Anna Bobay, Edna Schrader and Esther and Sophia Novick; the Messrs. Walter and Frank Schrader, Joseph, Everett, Aloysius and Anthony Fox, Alton Bauman, Lawrence Mommer, Joseph and Dale Delagrange, Gerald, Ben and August Eugene Martin, Alfred and Hubert Sordelet and Bernard Bobay.

## **YESTER-YEAR CONT.**

### **A BIG FAMILY.**

#### **A Reunion at the Home of Mr. and Mrs. John a. Rondot.**

Ft. Wayne Gazette Aug. 23, 1894

There was a happy family reunion at the home of Mr. and Mrs. John A. Rondot yesterday, at their Washington township home, one-half mile east of Wallen, the occasion being the forty-fourth anniversary of the marriage of the aged couple. Mr. Rondot is 75 years of age and is the father of fourteen children and grandfather of forty-two grandchildren, a total of fifty-six descendants, possible as large a family as there is in Allen county. All the descendants were present at the reunion except two sons, Emile, of Chicago, and Jules, of Bucyrus, Ohio. The balance live in this county. Those present were Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Rondot and family, Mr. and Mrs. Charles Rondot and family, Mrs. Jules Rondot and children, Mr. and Mrs. Eugene Rondot and family, Mr. and Mrs. Felix Rondot and family, Mr. and Mrs. John Payton and family, Mr. and Mrs. F.P. Rosselot and family, Misses Sophia, Amelia and Julia Rondot, Frank Rondot.

Photographer Shoaff was present and photographed the big family in a group.

### **A Country Party**

Weekly Sentinel May 18, 1910

The beautiful country home of Mr. and Mrs. Frank Oberley, of Jefferson township, was the scene of a merry gathering of friends last Saturday evening. The occasion was the birthday anniversary of Edward Oberley. The company gathered at a neighboring house and proceeded to the Oberley home all at once. The surprise was a complete one and that fact contributed much to the pleasure of those who participated. Music was furnished for dancing by Louis Gremaux and Clarence Townsend. At midnight a fine supper was served and the entire evening was thoroughly enjoyed. Those present included Misser Stella Banet, Eleanor Voirol, Lucy Gradieux, Edna and Mildred Monnot, Bertha Vanderley, Della Roy, Pearl Merillat, Rosa Kramer and Stella Mason, of Edgerton, Ind., Messrs. Arthur Banet, Phil Bellis, Dennis Lothamer, Joseph Small, Edward Roy, Edward Oberley, Frank Voirol, John King, Clarence Townsend, William Girardot, Arthur Oberley, August Lamblin, Louis Gremaux, William Fatman, Elmer Oberley, Julian Gremeaux, George Merillat, Joseph Urbine, Chester Comment, Joe Roy, Jesse Allen, Jennings, Comment, Clem Grumeaux; Arthur Vanderley, Mr. and Mrs. Ed. Monnot and Mr. and Mrs. Orta Lenington, of Zulu.

### **Ft. Wayne Journal Gazette, Sept. 7, 1907**

Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Lothamer of Jackson Township held a family reunion last Sunday in honor of their son Jesse, who leaves within a few days to resume his studies at Baltimore, Md. The members of the family who were present to enjoy the reunion were Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Lothamer, Jr. and family, Mr. and Mrs. T. Lechner and family, Mr. and Mrs. John Lothamer and family, Mr. and Mrs. Lester Lothamer and family, Mr. and Mrs. Oliver Lothamer and family, and Mr. and Mrs. Lomont and family, Mr. and Mrs. Albert Lothamer and family.



## *Yester Year Cont.....*

### **A Surprise Party.**

Ft. Wayne Journal Gazette June, 19, 1911

Last Thursday evening the home of Mr. and Mrs. James Kline, near New Haven, was filled with a number of friends and relatives who came to remind Mr. Kline of his seventy-first birthday. Card playing and refreshments made the evening pleasant for everyone concerned. The guests were Mr. and Mrs. Frank Kline, Mr. and Mrs. John Sordelet, Mr. and Mrs. Henry Kline, Mr. and Mrs. Louis Martin and the Misses Frances Kline, Mildred Holmes, Blanche and Mary Sordelet and Cleopha Martin and Messrs. Nicholas Kline, John Kline, Thomas Miller, Charles Kline, Charles Ephraim and Samuel Bacon, Louis Sordelet, Frederick Martin, Leonard, Francis and Edward Sordelet. At eleven o'clock the guests departed wishing Mr. Kline many more happy birthdays.

### **Miller Family.**

Ft. Wayne News Sentinel, August 9, 1918

The first annual reunion of the Miller family was held last Saturday, Aug. 3, at the home of Mrs. Charles Minnick, ten miles west of Fort Wayne, at which ninety-five members were in attendance. The following officers were elected for the next year: Jacob Miller, president; Frank Miller, vice president; Robert Freiberger, secretary, and Edward Klein, treasurer. The other members present were Mrs. Joseph Miller, Mr. and Mrs. B. Frieburger, Mr. John Klein, Mr. and Mrs. George Minnick, Mr. and Mrs. Harry Shives and family, Mr. and Mrs. George Sorg and family, Mr. and Mrs. Ben Baker and family, Mr. and Mrs. Robert Miller, Mr. and Mrs. Ed Hanbruck and family, Mr. and Mrs. J.W. Lane and family, Mrs. Peter Manock, Mr. and Mrs. Edward Klein, Mr. and Mrs. John Klein, Jr., Charles Klein and Joseph Weigand, Mr. and Mrs. Henry Frieburger, Mr. and Mrs. Edward Rosenberger and family, Mr. and Mrs. Clein Kreiburher, Mr. and Mrs. Clarence Crokers, Mr. and Mrs. Walter Shives and Mr. and Mrs. McCayard.

### **DODANE REUNION.**

Ft. Wayne Journal Gazette, Sept. 9, 1916

The sixth annual reunion of the dodane family was held at the home of Mrs. Mary Dodane, southeast of New Haven, Ind. Over one hundred relatives were present and partook of a sumptuous dinner at noon, after which outdoor amusements were indulged in. Officers were elected as follows, President, Peter F. Dodane, Ft. Wayne; vice-president, Frank J. Miday, Louisville Ohio; secretary Eugene J. Miday, Canaton, Ohio; entertainment committee: Frank Federspiel, Alma Dodane, Ft. Wayne; Mrs. Leonard Mourey, New Haven; Louis J. Miday, Akron, Mrs. Richard Krum and Dorothy Miday of Louisville, Ohio. The next reunion will be held on September 4, 1917, in Starke county, Ohio.

*For those who have not as yet paid. . . . .*

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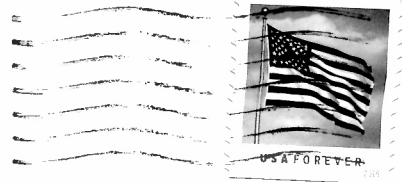
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FORT WAYNE, IN 46845**



Adam Barrone LFTM  
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Fort Wayne, IN 46807

