



## CONTINUATION OF THE ARTICLE

### THE WESTRICK FAMILY OF ALLEN AND PAULDING COUNTIES

By Rev. James W. Lothamer, PSS

#### Franz Westrick, Agnes Ritter and Their Children

We've already seen that Franz arrived in Ohio in 1852. Agnes, his wife, did not arrive until 1854 - - and therein lies a tale. Many years ago Eva Westrick of Ft. Wayne told me the story of how Franz and Agnes came over on the same ship and that the Ritters experienced difficulties of some sort or another. Young 19 year old Franz, on the same ship, came to their rescue, and even though Agnes was then only 11, that was how Franz and Agnes met. They married in 1861, when Agnes was 18.

What I have subsequently discovered does not quite fit the facts as told by Eva; but I have no doubt that there is a kernel of truth to her story. What are the facts, then, as revealed in the historical documents? All sources point to Switzerland for Agnes' birth, most likely Berne (per the 1860 census). In 1854 we find a family of Ritters traveling on the ship Stanislaus: the parents Joseph (40) and Theresia (42) and twins, Edward and Agnes, both age 11. Did great-grandma have a twin brother whose existence was not remembered by later generations? All the evidence points in that direction, because in the 1860 census for Oxford, Erie Co., Ohio, we find an Edward and Agnes Ritter (sic), ages 17, living with J. and Clara Myer. I am assuming that this Edward and Agnes are the same as those of the 1854 immigration record. The ages and the somewhat unusual names for twins make it more than probable.

Teenage twins living with another couple seems to validate part of Eva's story: that something happened to the Ritter family. It would appear that both of the parents died, given that there is not a trace of the Ritter parents beyond the ship record and the arrival of the children at Sandusky and given that both of the children ended up living with another couple. Perhaps there was illness (cholera outbreaks were rife in Sandusky and the area at that time) or an accident. Whatever the tragedy, it may well be that young Franz Westrick did something in Sandusky to assist this family, thereby endearing himself to the Ritters - and meeting his future wife.

Regarding Agnes' twin, we find Edward Ritter volunteering for the Ohio Voluntary Infantry and serving in the Civil War from February until September of 1865. In the 1870 census, Edward is working as a farm hand on the farm of Anthony Lothammer (Lutehamer) in Oxford, Erie Co., Ohio. He subsequently married Rosena Huber at St. Anthony's church in Milan, Ohio, in 1873. In 1874 he moved to Benton, Paulding Co., Ohio, where he bought land from Theobald Lothammer. There, he and Rosena had a child, Emma Elizabeth. Her baptismal record is found in the St. John's, Payne, church book, but in the section recording baptisms for nearby Antwerp. Edward appears back in Sherman Township, Huron Co., in 1875, buying land, which he then turned around and sold to Franz Westrick in 1876. Edward became a naturalized citizen in 1876, recording his birth date--presumably the same for his twin Agnes. **Continued on page 3**

*President's Message ... Barbara Gorney*

The Besancon Historical Society met on June 25, 2016 at the newly restored home that was formerly the church office and before that the nun's convent. It is now named St. Agnes Atrium. (See pictures of the completed project in Issue 60, Vol. 3). The project of putting the archive photos on a CD has been put on hold. This was due to equipment, time, and marketing. No further work is in progress in the cemetery. The back section completed, with pictures also in Issue 60, Vol. 3.

The cemetery looks great. It not only is mowed, but the edging around the stones has also been done. It is good the cemetery is part of St. Louis Besancon church property because farmers could move the tombstones as long as they didn't disturb human remains. Farmers could also graze livestock on that land. That is, until a 2000 Indiana law. One such cemetery in Marion County was saved when a highway was planned in the area of interstates 69 and 465. The graves were relocated to Crown Hill Cemetery in Indianapolis and placed in the pioneer section.

This was a huge undertaking! A permit was issued by the Department of Health and then descendants of people who were buried in the cemetery were identified and informed of the move in order to get their consent. There were many unmarked burials. To start, the topsoil needed to be stripped so workers could see the darker soils that represented the location of grave shafts. Every piece of coffin and human remains were kept together for each person. When they were reburied at Crown Hill, person A was next to person B. All this was done five years before the construction of the new road. With the move, the tombstones are fixed and regular maintenance will be maintained. The rededication of the cemetery was like a family reunion, with many cousins being brought together and sharing their genealogy.

*BARBARA*

*Continued from page 1:*

Now here is the mystery: after 1876, Edward, Rosena and Emma Ritter completely disappear from the map. I have searched hard for evidence of their fate and come up with absolutely nothing. Having disappeared from the written record, they also “disappear” from all family oral history. No one in the Westrick family seems to have ever heard of a twin to Grandma Agnes. Given 19th century sensibilities, one wonders if some “scandal” was associated with Edward, which caused the family to no longer speak of him.

In the ‘90’s, I met Loretta Coulardot, one of the last surviving grandchildren of Franz and Agnes. She was close to 100 at the time. I asked her if she had ever heard that “Grandma Agnes” had a twin brother. Though she had vivid memories of her grandmother (Agnes lived with Loretta’s family), she could not recall if she had ever heard anything about a twin brother.

But the story does not end there. Franz and Agnes had a son John, who married Mary Gabes. The couple lived up by Ionia, Michigan. Several years after meeting Agnes Coulardot, I met a granddaughter of John, Mary O’Connor. Quite interested in my Westrick research, she had memorabilia and pictures to share, handed down in the John Westrick family. Among the pictures was an unmarked photo of a man who looked to be in his 30’s. Mary had no idea who this might be. But as we looked closely at it, we noticed he had a pin stuck in the lapel of his coat with an “R” on it. Could this be Edward Ritter, the twin of Agnes Ritter Westrick? My thought was: who else could it be? *Why would such a picture be in a collection of Westrick photos if it were not the twin Edward?*

Among other pictures was that of a couple who truly looked like immigrants: their large winter coats bundled around them, their hats firmly secured. But unfortunately, no names were written on the picture. *Why would John Westrick have such a photo?* Our thought at the time was that this is a picture either of Joseph and Theresa Ritter, John’s grandparents, or of the Gabes parents or grandparents. Given that the vast majority of Mary O’Connor’s pictures were from the Westrick family, my inclination was to see these as Ritter pictures. But again—we needed that “smoking gun” for a positive identification.

Franz Westrick, born 6 March, 1833 in Brücken, died 31 July, 1893, in Benton, Paulding Co., age 60. His will, witnessed by the pastor of St. John’s, Fr. James P. McCloskey, left a 40-acre farm valued at \$833.00, requesting it not be sold as long as Agnes lived.

There are not many stories about Franz. His grandson Noelen told me Franz was quite smart, able to speak several languages and that he had a nice book collection. That book collection was mentioned in Franz’s will. “He had a dark complexion” was about the only memory of my grandmother, Teresa Susan Westrick Lothamer; Franz died when she was 9.

Recollections about Agnes are more plentiful. Born 15 March 1843 (according to her twin Edward’s naturalization record), she lived until 29 Aug. 1921. Loretta Coulardot knew her grandmother quite well, Agnes lived with her family for several years. Loretta told me Agnes was “like a grandma” for all. She had good health and was “full of fun”. She particularly enjoyed gardening and sewing. Another granddaughter, Clarice Lothamer Linder, told me that Agnes could sing and yodel quite well, a reflection of her Swiss background.

Franz and Agnes are buried in St. John's cemetery, Payne, Ohio. Next to them is their youngest daughter, Eva, who died as a little child. At St. John's church, their names are on the brick walk-way leading to the front doors.

Their children were as follows, per research by Loretta Gerber, Blanche Westrick, Irene (Westrick) Swihart and myself.

1. **Frank M.** Westrick, born 8 May 1862 (Erie Co. Ohio; baptized at St. Mary's Sandusky OH 21 May), died 24 Oct. 1952 (Ft. Wayne, Allen, Indiana). He married on 30 April 1889 in Paulding Co., Ohio Mary Rosswurm. She was born 15 June 1864 (Attenhausen, Nassau, Germany) and died 8 Feb. 1911 (Ft. Wayne, Allen, Indiana). Their Westrick children: Adolph, Victoria Fox. Loretta Coulardot and Cecilia Hendricks.
2. **Alphonse** Westrich, born 17 Dec. 1863 (date from Eva; Huron or Erie Co. OH), died 2 Nov. 1932 (Hawthorne, Los Angeles, CA). He married on 14 May 1906 Alice Mathilda "Tillie" Cline/Stevenson (Nevada Co. CA). She was born 20 Nov. 1869 (Graniteville, Nevada, CA) and died 22 Dec. 1967 (Hawthorne, Los Angeles, CA). He had two step-children. There are no living direct descendants. Alphonse kept the German spelling of his name as Westrich.
3. **John** Westrick, born 6 Sept. 1865 (Sherman, Huron, OH), died 29 May 1936 (Ann Arbor, Washtenaw, MI). He married on 25 Nov. 1890 (Immaculate Conception, Bellevue OH) Mary Gabes. She was born 9 Feb. 1861 (Groton, Erie, OH) and died 19 Feb. 1920 (Ronald, Ionia, MI). Their Westrick children: John F. and William F., with two unnamed daughters dying in infancy.
4. **Elizabeth** Westrick, born 28 July 1867 (Sherman, Huron, OH), died 14 Feb. 1922 (Toledo, Lucas, OH). She married Alfred Grant 19 Jan. 1892 (St. Paul's Catholic, Norwalk OH). He was born ca. 1870 (Huron Co. OH?) and died 13 Sept. 1944 (Toledo, Lucas, OH). One son, no living descendants. Their **Grant** child: Herbert.
5. **Joseph Seymore** Westrick, born 24 March (not 18 March) 1870 (Sherman, Huron, OH) Bapt. 3 April (St. Sebastian), died 11 March 1966 (Ft. Wayne, Allen, IN). He married 1 Jan. 1895 (Allen Co., IN) Estella Ricker. She was born ca. 1871(Where?), died ca. 1897 (near Little Rock, Ark.) Their Westrick child: Joseph, who died of cholera at same time as mother. Joseph married second on 18 April 1901 (Paulding Co. Oh) Lidia "Elizabeth" Nickelson. She was born 11 Oct. 1879 (Allen Co., IN), died 2 Feb. 1966 (Ft. Wayne, Allen, IN). Their Westrick children: Francis "Marion", Marie A. Myers, James "Roy", Josephine A. Pratt, Rose B. Wilson, Cornelia "Eva", Joseph A., Elizabeth "Irene" Swihart, Daniel R., Harmon "Elias", Paul "Ernest", and Noelen A.
6. **Charles** Westrick, born 8 March 1873 (obit: Germantown = Bismark, Sherman Twn., Huron OH), died 15 Nov. 1953 (Peru, Miami, IN). He was buried (according to obit) in *Lehman Cemetery* (Benton, Paulding, OH) but curiously there is no cemetery record of burial nor a date on his grave marker. He married on 16 July 1895 (Paulding Co., OH) Sarah Margaret King, born 4 Nov. 1872 (Benton, Paulding, OH) and died 17 June 1946 (Benton, Paulding, Ohio). Their Westrick children: Lloyd, Octave Brindle and Opal Gaunt.



7. **Mary** Westrick, born 18 Dec. 1874 (Sherman, Huron, OH), bapt. 20 Dec. (St. Sebastian), died 22 Nov. 1968 (Royal Oak, Oakland, MI). She married on 21 Feb. 1897 (Paulding Co., OH) John Hines. He was born 22 Dec. 1872 (Ohio) and died 16 Jan. 1959 (burial: Prairieville Cem., Barry Co. MI; place of death is uncertain). Their **Hines** Children: Russell, Corless, Dennis, Frederick and Marvetta.
8. **Rosa Caroline “Carrie”** Westrick, born 1 March 1877 (Sherman, Huron Co. most likely), died 11 Oct. 1960 (Toledo, Lucas, OH) She married on 20 Dec. 1894 (Antwerp, Paulding, OH) Jesse W. Cummings. He was born 31 May 1874 (Antwerp, Paulding, OH) and died 11 March 1956 (Antwerp, Paulding, OH). Their **Cummings** children: Sr. Helen E., Cemantha Kelley and Nellie Juanita.
9. **Regina** Westrick, born 7 Sept. 1879 (Sherman, Huron, OH), bapt. 21 Sept. (St. Sebastian), died 28 July 1962 (Monroeville, Allen, IN). She married on 9 Feb. 1898 Minard Kever. He was born 24 Nov. 1866 (Dixon, Van Wert, OH) and died 12 Dec. 1929 (Monroeville, Allen, IN). Their **Kever** children: Belzona A. Urbine, Lelah F. Kline, Ambrose G., Lula May, Irene S. a.k.a. Sr. Tillis, Infant, Gustave J., Pernetta R. Sheehan (Sheehan), Mary Elizabeth Fowler, Norbert R., Daniel J., Rita Pauline Schall/Fry and Minard L.
10. **Catherine “Katie” Agnes** Westrick, born 1 March 1882 (Sherman, Huron, OH), bapt. as Agnes Catherine 19 March (St. Sebastian), died 31 Aug. 1963 (Crestline, Crawford, OH). She married on 28 Oct. 1902 (Allen Co. IN) August Cullen. He was born 24 April 1879 (Convoy, Van Wert OH) and died 20 May 1953 (Crestline, Crawford, OH). Their **Cullen** children: Joseph, Kathleen Scanlan, August, David T. and William.
11. **Teresa “Susan”** Westrick, born 5 June 1884 (grave marker incorrectly says 1885) (Benton, Paulding, OH), bapt. 20 July (St. John’s Payne), died 16 July 1955 (Sturgis, St. Joseph, MI). She married on 5 Nov. 1901 (Grand Rapids, Kent, MI) Charles “Oliver” Lothamer. He was born 10 May 1878 (Jefferson, Allen, IN) and died 24 Oct. 1957 (Coldwater, Branch, MI). Their **Lothamer** children: Clarice Linder, Jos. Donald, Jesse P., Helen M. Templin, John, James and Jean Linehan.
12. **Eva Maude** Westrick, born 21 July 1887 (Benton, Paulding, OH), bapt. 14 Jan. 1888 (St. John’s, Payne), died 22 Oct. 1888 (Benton, Paulding, OH). She is buried at St. John’s, Payne, next to her parents.

## CONCLUSION

From my study of all three branches of the Westrick family, I find three traits that all share. First, most of these immigrants and many of their children became parents of extremely large families: many with 10 children or more. Second, they were *very devout* in their practice of the Catholic faith. Finally, most of them, while not wealthy, were moderately successful. None of them died impoverished.

For further information on all of these Westricks, see my family tree *Franz Westrick-Agnes Ritter* on [ancestry.com](http://ancestry.com) or, if you lack access, please e-mail me at [jwlothamer@aol.com](mailto:jwlothamer@aol.com). I would be happy to send you further information. This information can also be found at the Besancon Historical Society Archives and at the Allen County Public Library



Franz Westrick



Agnes Ritter Westrick



Children: Left to Rt.: Frank, Katie, Joe, Teresa, Carrie, Mary, Regina  
Circa the late 1940's



Father James Lothamer



Adolph & Blanche Westrick  
St.Louis Besancon Cemetery,  
oldest son of Frank Westrick

## *Friends of Besancon.....*

**Thank you to Fr. James Lothamer** for his generous donation to BHS. And his extensive family history article for the Chronicles!

**Charles E. Keys.** Member of BHS died February 19, 2016. Born in 1940 in Ft. Wayne to the late Charles and Martha Keys. Him and his wife of 54 ½ years lived in Mesa, AZ. Charles retired from Eastern Washington University in Oct. 2005. They had visited the Besancon area last July and enjoyed it immensely. Charles' lineage is associated with Florent Voirol and family on his mothers' side. Our condolences to his wife, Rose and thanks for contributing his family genealogy to BHS.

**Ronald (Ron) E. Venderly.** Lifetime Member of BHS died May 12, 2016, Ft. Wayne. Born in 1928 in Ft. Wayne to the late Celestin and Emma (Hawkins) Venderly. He had successful careers in the military, teaching and as a stockbroker. In retirement, Ron became a philanthropist to the city of Ft. Wayne, Ball State Univ, Purdue Univ., Indiana Univ., and IPFW. He was a generous supporter of BHS Library Fund. The "VENDRELY" surname derives from Etueffont-Haut, France, Department Territorie do Belfort formerly Department Haut Rhin. Our condolences to his wife, Joan, and family.

### 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

### All Officers are on the Internet

**Barb Pio Gorney..Pres.**

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

**Mary Jane Novosel Vice Pres., &  
Editor of Chronicles**

[jmj.novosel@frontier.com](mailto:jmj.novosel@frontier.com)

**Julie Nolan Secretary**

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

**Gene Yoquelet Treasurer**

[besancon@onlyinternet.net](mailto:besancon@onlyinternet.net)

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

**Ft. Wayne Journal Gazette**

Aug. 25, 1907

Time was—and even those of the younger generation can recall it—when it was deemed impossible to have an enjoyable picnic or outing of any magnitude without liquor of a kind frowned upon by the churches, or at least the near proximity of a place where liquor of one kind or another could be had. Times have changed mightily and beer is no longer a requisite factor in the having of a good time. Yesterday the Irish people of Allen county had their annual reunion at Monroeville, the center of a township where saloons are not tolerated, and the picnic was the most successful the local Celts have ever held. The Irish societies have always barred strong drink from their picnics and the success of Saturday's gathering in a "dry township" demolishes the old theory that the cheering cup must be where pleasure reigns. There was no liquor at the Monroeville picnic, but the young men imbued with the manly spirit of the Irish race had their athletic sports, and young and old enjoyed the day in the full consciousness that the fun was wholesome and beneficial instead of harmful and demoralizing. Not one of the fine young fellows who played baseball, football, and hurley but put up a better game and came home in a healthier condition than if his efforts had been stimulated by liquor. Recently the French Society of Allen County had a most successful and enjoyable picnic without strong drink on the refreshment

tables and its members were better off when night came. Beer is wholesome; alcohol is beneficial under certain circumstances, but in this day and age neither is necessary in the making of a holiday.

**EVARD REUNION**

Ft. Wayne Journal Gazette Aug. 23, 1919

The Evard family reunion will take place on Labor day, September 1, at the home of Clement Evard, in Jefferson township. All members of the family are urged to be present.

**A Country Party** submitted by **Barb Gorney**

Ft. Wayne Weekly Sentinel Feb. 28, 1906

A Merry company of the friends of August Chevillot, of Jackson township, gathered at his home Friday evening in honor of the son of the family, Romey Chevillot. Pedro and a supper were the principal features of the evening. The Guests were Messrs. and Mesdames Charles Bammert, D. Lostie, William Pio, S. Emmenheiser, A. Girardot, J. Voirol, P. and E. Urbine, George Moore, Violand, Misses Rose Lamont, May Jones, Helen Davis, Irene Roy, Rose Rorink, Laura Urbine, Mileton Pio, Rhoda Jones, Martha Bonjour, Ermond Maurey, J.W. Jones, Frank Voirol, Clarence John and Ernest Lamont, Polite Bonjour, Jay Rorink, Orley Harvey, Asker Urbine, Edward Violand, Jesse Lothamer, Clarence . . . . .



## **YESTER-YEAR CONT.**

### **Bolt Stuns Youth**

Ft. Wayne Journal Gazette Aug. 20, 1914

Roy Barrand, a teamster, was rendered unconscious for several hours and his brother, Alfred Barrand, was thrown from his feet by a bolt of lightning that struck the barn on the Wiegman place, corner California and Lake avenues, during the storm yesterday afternoon. Dr. E. H. Kruse was rushed to the place with the city lungmotor, but the injured youth was reviving and the machine was not needed. Roy was seated on a work bench when the bolt hit the barn and was hurled to the floor, his head striking a board, bruising the scalp. His brother was not injured. The lightning tore a number of shingles from the roof of the barn. The Barrands live at the corner of North Clinton street and the Leo road.

### **PASSING OF A NOBLE SPORT**

Ft. Wayne Journal Gazette March 19, 1907

Every lover of clean, wholesome sport, every admirer of man's faithful friend, the horse, and every citizen of Fort Wayne who has rejoiced to see his home city honored and known abroad, will have reason to regret the dispersal of the famous Spy Run stables, or the "Centlivre string" as that group of race horses is better known all over the United States. The announcement that the Messrs. Centlivre are to dispose of their magnificent stock at Wabash today is received with sorrow by all who love the noble animals these gentlemen reared, and it is not without sorrow we see them retire from a field they entered without selfish motives and which they have filled with credit to themselves and renown to Fort Wayne.

This city enjoyed a reputation for speedy horses and manly out-door sports many years ago. More than two-score years have elapsed since the famous Red Cloud won honors on the half-mile track in the fields owned by Oscar Simons, the site now

occupied by the state school. After Red Cloud came Strathmore and Red Bell, of the Rockhill farm, and Atlantic King, the beautiful royal sire of many others that bear the name of "King" and deserve the title. Hand in hand with the fame won by the Kekionga baseball team that forty years ago, taught the national game to the country and laid an example that American youth outdoors has been emulation ever since, went the fame of the horses bred and trained in Fort Wayne.

Twenty years ago Louis and Charles Centlivre bought a few horses of good strain for pleasure and the development of the sport among the people of the city. They were successful breeders, and when they added Atlantic King to their stock they sprang into national fame. The sons and daughters of Atlantic King have been sent all over the United States and Canada, and everywhere they justified the hopes of their owners and carried the name and fame of Fort Wayne far and wide. Side by side with the manufactured products of the city the Centlivre horses made Fort Wayne known and Atlantic King, Frank Bogash, Harry O., Mary Centlivre, King Simmons, and other magnificent members of the Centlivre string, have served as an advertising medium for this city that could not be accomplished any other way.

The Centlivre brothers had no selfish motives in the breeding of fast horses. They loved sport themselves. Like men with good red blood should. They reaped no financial gain, but the contrary. But they kept at the work through pure love of it until other business cares now force them to relinquish it. We must all regret it, for it marks the passing of Fort Wayne as a center of the most kingly sport known to virile men.

The Spy Run stables will be no more, and the city that was the center of a nation's wonder when Robert J. made his performance in 1894 will mourn the passing of a princely breed of the noblest of animals.

But long live the Centlivres.

**New Haven, IN 46774**

Gene Yoquelet (260)622-4067

PORT WAYNE IN 1960  
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2011



Adam Barrone LFTM  
212 S. Cornell Court  
Fort Wayne, IN 46807