

KLEINE VOLKSBLATT

Westphalia Historical Society Newsletter

Volume XIV, Issue 2

Summer 2009

Connie Reichart, Editor

Early Settler

Mary Bertha Bruns was born January 16, 1858, the daughter of Herman and Anna Maria Bruns. On December 31, 1879, she entered the Franciscan Sisters of Wheaton, Illinois, as Sister Hedwig and worked at hospitals in Illinois and Wisconsin. She died November 20, 1954, at Racine, Wisconsin and is buried there in Calvary Cemetery. The Archivist for the order wrote: "We have a few Sisters here at our Motherhouse who knew Sister Hedwig in Racine in her later years. From them I learned that Sister Hedwig was a wonderful gardener and tended a large garden at the hospital, lavishing loving care on her vegetables, even feeding them cod liver oil! One Sister told me the reason her garden grew so well was because Sister never complained about the weather, saying 'Gottes vill, Gottes vetter.'" (The archivist was not sure if her German was correct.) Sister Hedwig had an older sister, Euphemia, born October 7, 1854, who entered the School Sisters of Notre Dame as Sister Nazaria on August 16, 1872, and died in Tascony, Pennsylvania (now part of Philadelphia) on August 6, 1879.

Memories from Agnes Veltrop Crede Schwartz Plassmeyer

"Grandpa Veltrop up the road from us had sold his house to Gus Kempker (he paid in cash) and he bought a house in Westphalia, across the street from Casper Buersmeyer - where Tip Weber's house is now located. Grandpa and Grandma celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary in August and Sister Henrita (Cornelia Veltrop) - my godmother - was home and she talked to Dad about me staying with Grandpa and Grandma and going to high school in Westphalia. It was a two-year high school. She still had hopes that I would become a nun. Anyway, that is how I got to go to high school. Dad talked to Henry Buersmeyer and Katie Fechtel about me riding with them on Monday mornings and Friday afternoons. It was about a mile and half from their road home.

"Sister Veronica was our teacher and had both grades in one room. The typewriters were located in the hallway. Emma Haselhorst from Folk was boarding at the sisters and was in the tenth grade. When I was in the tenth grade they qualified for a four-year high school. Two rooms were built on to the front and two rooms upstairs. Uncle Henry Rothove was the contractor. We had some of the best teachers, Sister Adolpha - math

teacher, Sister Dominic - English and history teacher, Sister Veronica - bookkeeping, German and shorthand. The music teacher. There were eight Notre Dame nuns and one cook. The Sisters took in boarders and students came from other places to stay there.

“While I was staying with Grandpa and Grandma I would help with the chores. This was the understanding. I would cut the grass, wash windows and on Tuesday mornings I would do the laundry on a washboard before I went to school - took a couple of hours. I would go home for lunch but to Mass every day. Of course, I had no money - so no social life. Once in a while I would get to go to a card party at school. Grandpa and Grandma would go to bed real early. Grandma knew I was going but she said not to say anything to Grandpa. He was hard of hearing and she had a time to explain things to him. Grandma said Grandpa couldn't wait until I returned on Mondays. He'd say in German, “Agnes always knows so much news.” I would tell him about the farm, etc. Uncle Gerhard would come and visit on Sundays and if he had to repeat something several times he'd get annoyed and go home. I think he would hear what he wanted to (Grandpa). Uncle Gerhard lived in the Westphalia parish where Pinnells now live.”

Courtesy of Mary Ann Klebba

175TH CELEBRATION

In conjunction with St. Joseph Parish's celebration of its 175th anniversary in 2010, the Westphalia Historical Society plans to publish an update to the history book published for the parish's sesquicentennial in 1985. To accomplish this task, each family in the parish is asked to update its family history information. If your family was not included in the previous book, please submit a family history for inclusion in this book.

The preferred format for these histories is electronic as a Word document or a text (doc. Or txt) file. If you have access to e-mail, please send your history and photos to hausdoc2@sbcglobal.net. If you do not have internet access, please submit your information (typed or hand-written) to Kevin Huber at 365 County Road 526, Freeburg, MO 65035. If you send an actual photo, please be sure it is clearly identified so that your photo can be returned. All histories should be turned in by September 15, 2009. Thank you.

Newsletter

We would like to send as many of these newsletter via e-mail as possible to save postage costs. If you wish to receive your newsletter via e-mail, please send your e-mail address to: cmr1939@hotmail.com and I'll send your next newsletter electronically. Again, thank you. If you receive this newsletter and there is a pink mark on your address that means your dues for 2009 have not been paid. Please remit dues to the historical society

as soon as possible so you can continue to receive the newsletters. We plan to have a newsletter mid August, November, February and May. Thank you

Westphalians to California Gold Rush

The 1850 census of Osage County includes some individuals who had gone to California for gold. On some pages, the census taker wrote "Gone to California" and on others he wrote "G to C." Possibly he got tired. Others who joined the hunt for gold are not listed.

In a letter Herman Bruns wrote to his wife he stated that in his group there were five wagons from Westphalia and two wagons from Loose Creek. A group of seven wagons of Germans from Illinois would probably join them. In addition to Herman, we know that Franz Geisburg, Joseph and Bernard Lueckenhoff, Caspar Heckemeier, Bernard Hillen, Joseph Stegeman, August Koch, a Hoecker, Frank Hageboeck, and a Renkemeier, were in this group. It is also known that William Boessen, Henry Markoni, and William Huber went to California in search of gold.

Herman Bruns got enough gold that he was able to have five gold rings made for his daughters. (One of his descendents told me they had seen one of the rings but wasn't sure who had it.)

Joseph and Bernard Lueckenhoff's father was not happy about their decision to seek gold as he left these two sons only \$5.00 in his will as "they had already costed him too much to go to California."

Mrs. Bruns, Mrs. Hageboeck, and Mrs. Heckemeier all gave birth while their husbands were in California. (Can you imagine any woman putting up with this today?)

William Boessen stayed in California and settled in the Sacramento area.

William Huber returned to Missouri for a while and then gathered his family and returned to California. In the 1860 census of Santa Clara County, CA he is listed with his family as a farmer. His brother, Henry, lived with him and is listed as a merchant. (Henry in 1854 was in San Francisco and deeded his land in Osage County to his sister-in-law, Elizabeth Huber, for \$1 with love and affection. Possibly Henry stayed in California after the hunt for gold.) In the 1880 California census, William Huber is living with his son and family in Alameda, California. William died there in 1888. William and Henry are brothers of Charles Huber who died in 1850 in Osage County.

Henry Markoni also returned to California with his family and is on the 1870 census of Yuba County, California. He is listed as a horticulturist. His son, Frank, born here in Westphalia, is listed on the 1880 and later censuses of California.

Although I can't prove it, I believe that August Koch also returned to California with his family as they disappear from the records here and are not on the Missouri census records.

If you know of anyone else from the area that joined the gold rush, please let me know at cmr1939@hotmail.com or the historical society address.

1845 OSAGE COUNTY PROPERTY TAX LIST

The following lists the total number of acres taxed for these Westphalians:
Francis Grammatica – 120; August Willibrandt – 123; Bernard Bruns – 400; Bernard Lindenbusch – 80; David Bruns – 80; Herman Bruns – 120; Francis Geisburg, 100; Bernard Linnemann – 160; William Luecke – 80; Francis Luecke – 80; Conrad Stuckenschneider – 40; Francis Hageboeck – 80; John Hillen – 114; Charles Huber – 280; George Fennewald – 80; Gertrude Schwartze – 320; Hubert Schlemback – 120; Adolph Scheulen – 200; William Huber – 41; Joseph Meierpeter – 40; and Ferdinand Holterman – 122.

DEATH RECORDS ON-LINE

The Missouri State Archives has death certificates on-line from 1910-1958 at www.sos.mo.gov/archives/resources/deathcertificates/. These records have been digitized and are printable. Death records are closed for 50 years and each year another year is put on-line. You can search for an individual name or a surname. This is a great resource for historians and genealogists.

Westphalia Historical Society
PO Box 244
Westphalia MO 65085