

# Wertman *Lines*

Newsletter of the Wertman Family Association

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## ***Reserve these dates:***

- ! Wertman Family Reunion 2006**
- ! Friday-Sunday, 18-20 August**
- ! Fort Wayne, Indiana**

## **Planning for the 2006 Wertman Family Reunion**

by Ken Cool, 2006 Reunion Chair  
<kencool@sbcglobal.net>

The Wertman Family Association Reunion Committee has reserved a block of rooms (king with sleep sofa) at the Comfort Suites North Fort Wayne, Interstate 69 exit 116. Our group rate is \$79.95 per night plus 12% tax for Thursday, 17 August, through Sunday, 20 August, including a deluxe continental breakfast each morning. Some double queen suites are available at \$89.95 plus tax.

To make your reservations, please call 260-480-7030 after 15 January 2006 and tell Paul Shah or Tammy Peoples that you are with the Wertman Family Association 2006. Please make your reservation as early as possible. The block of rooms (with one king bed and a sleep sofa) will be held until 15 July.

The motel is at 3302 E. Dupont Rd., Fort Wayne, IN 46825. You may Fax 260-480-7090, e-mail <vbscomfortsuites@aol.com>, or check online at <<http://www.hotel-rates.com/us/indiana/ft-wayne/comfort-suites-north.html>>.

We will have a hospitality room near the lobby on Thursday, Friday and Saturday evenings for those who want to compare notes, play cards or socialize.

The Researchers' Meeting will begin at 10:00 a.m. Friday at the Dupont Branch of the Allen County Library, 536 E. Dupont Road, Fort Wayne.

Friday evening's dinner at Don Hall's Guesthouse Hotel and Conference Center, 1313 W. Washington Center Road, starts at 6:00 p.m. The cost is \$20 for adults and \$10 for children.

A family picnic and the annual Business Meeting will take place on Saturday, and on Sunday, carpools will visit Wertman family sites of interest.

There are numerous places to see in and near Fort Wayne in addition to the Allen County Public Library with its immense collection of genealogical materials. Shoppers can browse at the largest indoor mall in Indiana, kids can visit one of the 10 best children's zoos in the U.S., and gardeners can tour the Botanical Gardens. Or, go to Science Central, the Lincoln Museum, the Auburn World War II Victory Museum, the Auburn Cord-Dusenberg Auto Museum, NATMUS Truck Museum and more!

Look for details in the June 2006 *Wertman Lines* newsletter or visit the WFA website, <<http://freepages.genealogy.rootsweb.com/~wertman>>.

## ***What's inside:***

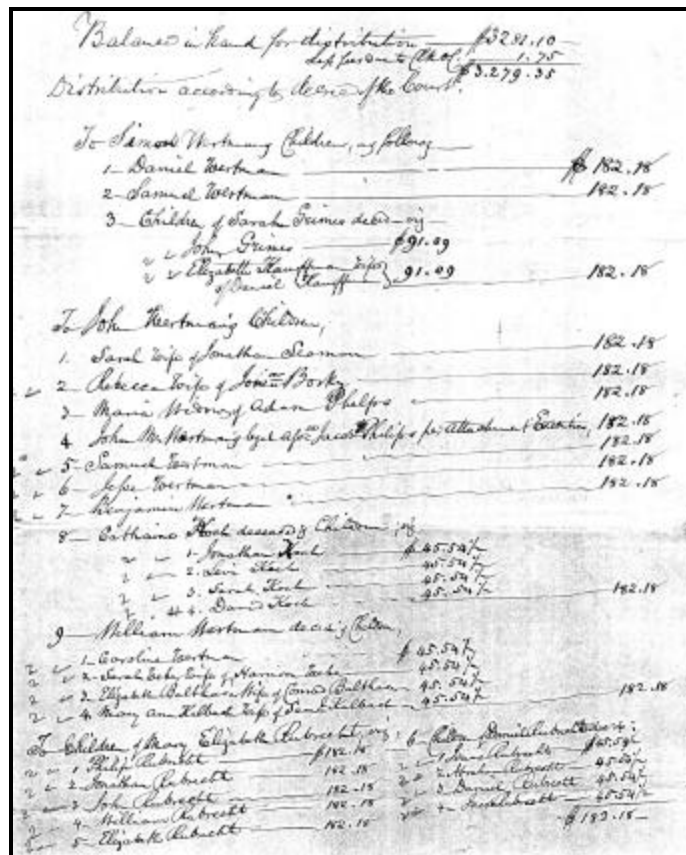
- Pg. 2 Our Search for Susanna's Tombstone*
- Pg. 3 Finding Martin's Farm*
- Pg. 5 Emanuel Wertman Wasn't a Deserter*
- Pg. 5 A Snake in the Bed*
- Pg. 6 One Family's Feuding*
- Pg. 7 Preserving Early Wertman Reunion Records*
- Pg. 8 A Reichelderfer Mystery Solved*
- Pg. 8 2006 WFA Officers*

# Our Search for Susanna's Tombstone

by Shirley M. Daniels, 2005 Researchers' Meeting

Each of my fifth-great-grandfather Martin Wertman's sons (grandsons of George Philip Wertman I) married a Susanna, so there were *three* Susanna Wertmans in the same time period in Berks County, PA, Centre Township area. Simon married Susanna Bucks, John married Susanna Meyer, but we had only a first name for Daniel's wife.

Because Daniel had no living descendants when he died in 1859, his heirs were his wife, and children and grandchildren of his deceased brothers and sister. Daniel's estate file in the Berks County Courthouse was a fantastic reference. As the law required, Daniel's land was sold after his death, with proceeds divided among his heirs. Administrators Samuel Wertman (his nephew), and William Hein (relationship unknown) had a complicated task dividing the estate among 29 relatives, and the distribution named all of them, documenting the relationships of three generations of Martin Wertman's descendants.



Daniel's wife Susanna received her widow's portion, interest yearly on one-third of \$109 from the sale of two acres of woodland in Centre Township. She kept the allowed \$300-worth of personal property — items such as a bed, bedding, basket, soaps, a bureau, small chest and clothing — and \$260 in cash. She also received \$3,800: half of the value of \$5,700 in promissory notes, \$1,032 cash, and \$330 "cash found among deceased's goods." (Stashed in a coffee pot? Tucked into the mattress? Hidden under the floorboards?)

Susanna had inherited a good deal of money, but her home had been sold, so where would the widow live? A search of the 1860 Federal Census revealed a Susanna Wertman in Kutztown, Penn Township, Berks County, age 83, immediately following William Heine and Sarah Heine.

Also, the Miscellaneous Deeds of Berks County record an agreement between Susanna Wertman of the borough of Kutztown and William Hein of Kutztown dated 10 April 1863. William and his wife Sarah would care and provide for the widowed Susanna during the rest of her life, give her a decent burial and erect a suitable tombstone. In return, they would receive all of Susanna's possessions when she died.

There was no tombstone for Susanna in the old graveyard at Salem Belleman's Union Church where Daniel was buried, and no record of her burial there. So, where was she buried? And had the Heins provided the suitable tombstone? It became my mission to find answers to these questions.

My husband Richard and I concentrated on the Kutztown area's few remaining church records, at the Berks County Historical Society. Finally, in a small booklet we requested from the stacks, we found a Susanna Wertman, listed next to William and Sarah Hine. The booklet of stones recorded at St. John's and Hope cemeteries in Kutztown gave the location of the graves with a notation that Susanna's stone was sunken in the ground.

We then drove to Kutztown, inquired about the cemeteries, and found tombstones for William and Sarah Hine beside a spot where Susanna's stone was supposed to be. It was gone, but we found it propped against a wall with other broken stones. (Coincidentally, Daniel's stone has also broken and is propped against a stone wall at Salem Belleman's.) Luckily for us, Susanna's stone had

broken off several inches below ground, and after we brushed off layers of dried mud, we were able to read KIEFFER, and 17 April 1777. Curiosity about her tombstone had led us to Susanna's maiden name and birth date.

We will have to dig further into records (or dig up the still-buried part of her tombstone) to find her death date and relationship to William or Sarah Hine/s. But this Susanna is no longer anonymous, and discoveries are what makes investigating family history FUN and EXCITING!



*Above: The tombstone for Susanna, wife of Daniel Wertman, in Kutztown, was against a brick wall.*

*Below: Moving the broken stone for a better view, and scraping off caked dirt revealed Susanna was born Kieffer, 17 April 1777.*



## Finding Martin's Farm

*by Richard K. Daniels, 2005 Researchers' Meeting*

Johan Martin Wertman, my wife Shirley's fifth-great-grandfather, was the son of George Philip Wertman I, an 18<sup>th</sup> Century settler in what is now Lehigh County, PA. In 1782, Martin bought 100 acres in Lynn Township. Tax records and an indenture show he moved to Berks County around 1792. We located Martin's land in Lehigh County, but where was his farm in Berks County?

Since Martin and some of his children were buried in the old graveyard at Salem Bellemans Union Church, his land must have been nearby. We found an 1810 indenture in the Pennsylvania Archives in Harrisburg showing that he bought 255 acres called Inn House from Thomas Cooper and Hans Kurtz in Bern Township, Berks County. Plat maps in Harrisburg for Cooper and Kurtz agreed with the description in the indenture and showed Plum Creek running through the property. Tax records at the Berks County Historical Society indicated that Martin also had a saw mill on the land.

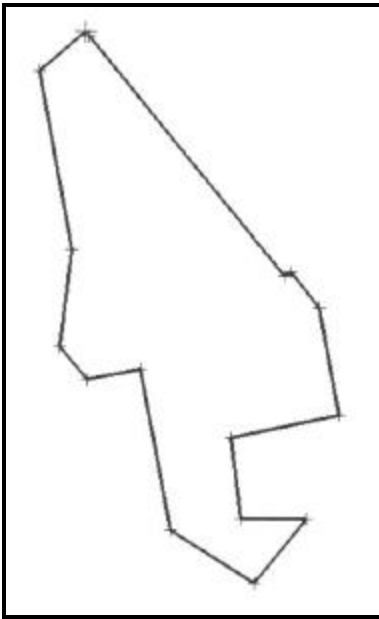
The southern end of Martin's land was hilly and heavily wooded. Pieces in this area were bought and sold between local residents and lumber companies without any records being filed, since there was no requirement that deeds be recorded at the county seat in Reading.

One record we found in Reading was an 1810 indenture from Martin, who sold 150 acres in Penn Township to his son Daniel. A description in the transfer indicated that Daniel received the western half of Martin's farm, divided by a line 31 degrees from north running northwest to southeast.

Martin died in 1823 and left a will giving his remaining 154 acres to his youngest son, John. John refused the land, and Jacob Renno and John Yoder bought the farm at public outcry in 1825 when it was sold to pay Martin's debts. The 1825 deed indicated that the farm was in Penn Township, Berks County. Finally, An indenture dated 1855 showed Daniel Wertman selling 138 acres in Centre Township, Berks County. We plotted computer-generated maps from descriptions in the indentures and they showed that all of the transactions involved the same land. So, where in Berks County was this farm?

We thought at first that Martin's land was located on the border of two townships, since one





*Using metes and bounds from an indenture, we used a computer program to diagram the shape of Martin's land in Berks County.*

border appeared to be the same 31 degrees that divided Martin's farm. However, our research showed no match. Nor was Plum Creek located in the right direction as shown in the early plat map. However, current maps do show a road running on the correct angle in Centre Township some three miles north of Salem Bellemans Church, crossing Irish Creek. Could this be Martin's land?

The land was described as being in four different townships not because it straddled

borders, but because new townships were formed. Bern Township was created in 1738 while the land was part of Lancaster County; Upper Bern was carved from Bern Township in 1789; Penn Township was divided from Bern and Upper Bern townships in 1841; and Centre Township was formed from Penn, Bern and Upper Bern townships in 1843.

We returned to Reading, and in the land records office we discovered some present borders in this area aligned with the northern borders of Martin's land. To determine whether this had been Martin's land, we selected two parcels, one that would have been on Daniel's half and one that would have been on Martin's portion, and traced land records back from the present owners, through grantee to grantor indentures, until we found connections to Martin. This indeed had been Martin's farm!

We visited this land at the intersection of Irish Creek and Trolley roads in Centre Township. The northern part of Martin's land is broken into one- to two-acre plots where new homes have been built or are under construction. This northern section



*Facing south on Trolley Road, which divides Martin's portion (left) from Daniel's half (right)*

is on high, mostly flat ground, and has a clear view of the surrounding area. The land south of Irish Creek is still heavily wooded.

Several months later, when going through some 1992 correspondence on a different family, we found a letter from a descendant of the Beckers who had purchased the land from Renno and Yoder. She could have provided the exact location of the land! Also, after our presentation last August, Kathy Bucher shared digital photographs of a Whiteside map showing the location of Martin's sawmill. While we could have located the farm earlier and easier, these other sources confirmed our findings.

Researching land records is tedious, but success in finding an ancestor's farm, particularly one from so long ago, and standing on the land, brings a thrill in addition to the "excitement of the chase."



*Further research may show whether this house and barn were Martin Wertman's or a later owner's.*

## Emanuel Wertman Wasn't a Deserter

from Russell C. Dannecker

On 28 November 2005, I sent the following e-mail to Bob Lowe, National Graves Registration Officer, Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War.

".... A recent search of the Graves Registration Project on Emanuel Wertman indicates that he is buried in the Vanderbilt Cemetery in Corwith, Otsego, Michigan. Under Unit, it states that he was a member of the 1st NY Light Artillery, Battery M, and served as a private. All of this is correct. But under miscellaneous information it states, "DSRT 6 Apr 1862." This is incorrect.

"The reported desertion is a common mistake, in that the Battery's unit history reports this to be a fact. A search at the National Archives and Records Administration in Washington, D.C., revealed a "Memorandum from Prisoner of War Records" and indicated that Emanuel Wertman was found in the Mis. Index of Camp Parole. I can send you an electronic copy of the document if you wish.

"After being released, he enlisted in the United States Navy on 8 December 1862 and was discharged 4 November 1864. During this time he served as a 'coal heaver' or 2nd class fireman. He served on the Princeton from 8 December 1862 to 26 December 1862; on the Patapsco from 27 December 1862 to 12 February 1863; on the Madgie from 13 February 1863 to 14 October 1863; on the Brandywine from 15 October 1863 to 30 November 1863; on the Violet from 1 December 1863 to 27 January 1864; on the Brandywine from 28 January 1864 to 31 July 1864; at the Norfolk Naval Station from 1 August 1864 to 15 September 1864; and on the Wyandotte from 16 September 1864 to 4 November 1864, when he was discharged for a physical disability. He received a Navy Invalid Pension for this service.

"My purpose in writing to is request that you correct our ancestor's records in your database. Please remove the "DSRT 6 Apr 1862." You can indicate that he was captured and paroled. Then, please indicate his naval service. If you require documents, please let me know and I will send copies to you."

On 2 December 2005, Bob Lowe responded, "I have modified the registration of Emanuel Wertman in the SUVCW National Grave Registration Database. Due to limited space in the "misc info" field, I had to shorten the amount of information you sent me. I hope you now find it acceptable. I appreciate the input and explanation. It is always gratifying to make a record correct and more complete."

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## A Snake in the Bed

submitted by Russell C. Dannecker

from the *Pennsburg Town and Country*  
newspaper, Saturday, August 23, 1902

"Bertha and Lizzie WERTMAN, aged respectively 9 and 7 years, daughters of William F. WERTMAN, of Strausstown, Berks county, had an odd experience on Wednesday morning. While the parents of the girls were downstairs at 7 o'clock they were attracted by the loud cries of their daughters. The father ran upstairs and found that they had just awakened. One told her father that a strange thing was in the bed, and she was so badly frightened that there were fears of her going into hysterics.

"Upon investigation, WERTMAN found a huge blacksnake lying in the bed. It was only then that the real cause of the alarm of the children was known. The moment the reptile noticed that it was being disturbed it showed signs of fight, and it was some moments before the monster was dispatched. Bertha, the eldest child, discovered the presence of the snake first. While in bed she came in contact with the cold body and it sent a shiver through her, although she did not know what it was. When she found out the cause she lost no time in calling her parents.

"It is supposed that the previous evening the snake worked its way up the grape vine and along the arbor which runs up to the edge of the house, and then entered the open window and crawled under the cover on the bed in which the girls slept and lay there undisturbed until morning. It measured five feet seven inches in length."

# One Family's Feuding

by Shirley M. Daniels, 2005 Researchers' Meeting

Documents in the Register of Wills office in Berks County (PA) provided some interesting reading: They revealed two disputes over estate settlements for my third-great-grandfather Daniel Wertman (son of Simon, grandson of Martin, great-grandson of GPI) and his wife Elizabeth (Greim).

When Daniel died in 1879, Elizabeth asked to keep personal property to the value of \$300. Their farm was sold at public outcry. After payment of Daniel's debts, two-thirds of the remaining \$364 was divided among the heirs. The widow was to receive yearly interest from the investment of the final third.

The dispute over Daniel's estate involved Emma Zechman, who had lived with her grandparents since age six. She presented a claim for an "outfit" and wages for two years of service to Daniel and Elizabeth after she reached age 21. One deposition explained that an outfit "generally consists of a bed and bedding bureau, table, Queensware, cradle, dough trough, 1/2 doz chairs, cooking stove, buckets, tubs, tinware &c." In the questioning, Emma's father, John Zechman, said that something about an outfit and a cow was said between him and Daniel at the time Emma went to live with her grandfather. The auditor disallowed Emma's claims as there was no proof of a contract.

The widowed Elizabeth died at the home of her nephew, Henry Wertman, and he was executor of her estate. Her will directed that Henry sell her furniture and give \$1 to each of four grandchildren, then divide the rest among her three living children.

The dispute over Elizabeth's estate involved her daughter Mary. Henry's estate accounting reported debits more than credits, leaving about \$3.50 due to Henry. Mary accused Henry of not putting proper amounts for sale of the goods in the inventory, faking credit "of \$200 for boarding Elizabeth for 4 years, and more. Mary testified that "after the old lady died," she and her brother counted out nine note dollars and \$14.44 of Elizabeth's money for Henry to pay the funeral things.

The estate file included eight pages of Henry's rebuttals, hastily scrawled by the court clerk. Henry had borrowed money but said he had paid it back. He denied receiving \$14.44 for funeral expenses. "All the things for the funeral was paid

with my own money.... I held the funeral at my house.... I bought things for the funeral for \$9... at Obold's and I paid him 9 note dollars... I got 85¢ on a dollar for those note dollars then I had to pay \$1.35 to make up the balance."

Testimony also revealed that none of the relatives wanted to keep "the old lady." Henry said, "She never paid any board to me.... She was at home with me about 4 years. She boarded with me from April 1880 to Nov 1, 1883, when she died, except when she went visiting.... She went to live with Mrs. Loeb ... about the winter of the second year she lived with me... It was about 4 weeks afterward that she came to live with me again.... Mrs. Loeb would not keep her.... She went from Loeb's to Mrs. Strouse and after that she went to Benneville Zerbe and he brought her to me again.... Then in 1882 she left me again... went to my brother about a couple of

Stoves, pipe \$1.50 tub. 27 Stove 2.20	3 97
Sandris .25 water tub \$2.25 Brevete .46, 2 curchins .32	3 72
175. chairs \$1.75 tub \$1.50 Kettle \$1.10 cash 35	3 00
lot house .46 tub \$2.25 Stoves .25 Kettle .23	1 19
lot Kettle \$1.75 Sandris .50 wafeliron .13 sandris .35	2 73
lot pots .35 chair .07 chest .22 head of bed \$1.72 bed \$1.40	2 76
Buckys harness \$1.00 lot bags \$2.15 Bucky harness \$6.00	9 75
lot 4 yep \$3.70 outfit \$1.00 harness \$2.00 semi iron \$1.40 house \$2.24	5 54
iron press \$1.25 chest \$1.00 iron \$1.75 spring \$1.00	2 40
iron .20 sandris \$1.16 chest .15 apel buter .20 beuro \$1.00	1 56
chest .15 chair \$1.00 Reprod. \$1.00 bed \$1.00 beuro \$1.00	6 75
Reifel \$2.25 iron \$1.00 iron \$1.00 lot carpet \$6.50	8 95
Storage \$2.50 clock \$1.40 lot carpenter tools \$1.30	5 20
cut board \$1.50 tub \$1.40 water hand \$1.00 lot chairs \$1.75	6 31
locking glass .23 water \$1.35 lot sandris .60 hammer .72	2 90
splitting tools .75 wood saw .32 sandris .75 carpenter .50	2 52
Sandris .05 2 hogs \$13.00 wheelbarrow .25 manure fork .50	13 53
cow \$20.35 prim stone .75 calce .35 manure fork \$2	21 85
horse .14 basket .20 hay bushel \$1.00 Kettle .65 lot dishes \$3.00	4 13
	\$107 25

This page from Daniel Wertman's estate file shows a slice of 1879 life. Appraisers inventoried basic household items and farm tools as well as "pottatoes," "soab" and "apel buter." There was a "wafeliron" and a "reifel," but Daniel's most valuable possessions were a "bucky" harness, lot of carpet, a "bed & sted," two hogs, and a cow.

months.... In 1883 I moved to Penn Twp.... my cousin brought her there, then she remained with me till she died.... She did not help to do the work during the whole time she was with me. She was 82 years old when she died if I am right.... My wife washed for the old lady sometimes and sometimes the old lady washed herself but could not do it right so that my wife washed it over.... Can't tell how many months she ate at my table altogether.... I charged her \$200 because she had her home with me all this time and boarded with me.... I charged the rate of \$8 a month. I furnished her with all the food, she had her furniture there and made it her home. When she went to all the other people it was more in a visit. The children always burdened her on me. They were able to support her better than I. I am poor and they are rich. I had to take care of her."

After a series of postponements of the adjudication, Mary dropped her case. Unfortunately, the estate file did not contain an inventory appraisal or details of the items sold. Henry was not specific about what he owed the estate, although the details may have been on another paper that has since disappeared. Under money due to him, he has listed the loss on silver coin, the \$200 board, and \$25 to the "executor for care and trouble for settling the estate." There appeared to be no payment to any heirs. However, The Court apparently found nothing amiss in Henry's administration of the estate.

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## Preserving Early Wertman Reunion Records

by Shirley Daniels

To ensure that early Wertman Reunion records are preserved, Wertman Family Association member Kathy Bucher digitally copied the original minutes and attendance lists from 1922-1934 and compiled an index of names on the lists. At the 2005 Wertman Researchers' Meeting, Kathy presented information about these early reunions and offered each researcher a CD containing the digital copies of the original records plus the database in different formats -- Microsoft Works, an Excel-compatible file, and a text file. Kathy also included a file of explanatory notes on each CD.

The index lists an individual with the earliest address (place) given. A number under a column for each reunion year gives that person's order on the list for that year, so that a researcher can easily find where to look in the original records.

When different individuals signed in at the reunion, the handwriting is often difficult to read. In some years, identical, more legible script indicates that one person wrote all of the names, but on these lists the spelling is not always consistent or accurate.

The same person could be in the database several times if an address, initials, spelling or name varied from year to year, for example, if a woman married, or signed as Mrs. John Doe one year, and Jane Doe another year.

Some of the more frequent surnames were Betts, Brown, Dannecker, Eberts, Fenstermacher, Frantz, Frey, Fritz, Geiger, Hamm, Henniner, Horn, Hunsicker, Jones, Leiby, Lorah, Mantz, Middlecamp, Miller, Moser, Schlear, Schuck, Smith, Snyder, Steigerwalt, Sthare and, of course, Wertman.

Most people came from Lehigh and Berks counties. A few traveled from Philadelphia and Scranton, PA; Danbury CT; Chicago IL; Alpha, Bayonne, and Jersey City NJ; New York City, Cleveland OH; Scranton PA; and Charleston WV.

Those who attended more than five reunions in the 12-year period were all from Pennsylvania: Mrs. Sarah Eberts, New Ringold; Mr. & Mrs. Edwin Fritz, Breinigsville; Mr. & Mrs. William Gedman, Reading; Mr. & Mrs. George Geiger, Allentown; Mr. & Mrs. Charles Kemmerling, Bethlehem; Mr. & Mrs. Tillman O. Kleintop, Danielsville; Mr. & Mrs. Harvey A. Middlecamp, Lehigh; Mrs. Howard S. Miller, Allentown; Mr. & Mrs. Ellsworth Moyer, Breinigsville; Mr. & Mrs. Dewey Nissen, Slatington; Mr. & Mrs. Griffith Rollands, Slatington; Mr. & Mrs. Raymond Schaffer, Slatington; Mr. & Mrs. Edgar Sharbaugh, Lehigh; Mrs. John P. Steigerwalt, Lehigh; Mr. & Mrs. Daniel Wertman, Wescoesville; Mr. & Mrs. James M. Wertman, Allentown; Mr. Jefferson A. Wertman, Andreas; Mr. & Mrs. Moses Wertman, New Ringold (10 reunions); Mr. Norman Wertman, Slatington; Mr. & Mrs. Oscar Wertman, Slatington; and Mr. & Mrs. Thomas Wertman, Emerald.

This is a valuable research tool and contribution to our organization. Thank you, Kathy!

## A Reichelderfer Mystery Solved

by Tom Young

At our 2004 Researchers Meeting, I reported that Anna Maria, wife of John Wertman (son of Simon, grandson of GPI), was born a Reichelderfer. John's brother Jacob had married Maria Magdalena Reichelderfer, so this made sense. But, what was the relationship between these Wertman wives? Several online sources indicated that they were second cousins. I cautioned that my references contained no documentation to support the claim. I had noticed that Magdalena's father was referred to as Johan Adam, while the deed dividing his land named him as Johannes. I let it pass, but I know better!

Subsequent research found that an erroneous lineage apparently originated in "The Monnet Family Genealogy," by Orra Eugene Monnet, 1911. Later, this found its way into the LDS IGI and, thus, many online databases. The error was corrected by very persistent research and reported in "The

Reichelsdoerfer Family of New Hanover Township, Montgomery County, Pennsylvania," by Fayne E Harter, 1993.

The second cousin relationship is based upon a claim that Maria's father Michael and Magdalena's father Johan Adam were first cousins. Yes, Michael and Johan Adam were first cousins, but Magdalena's father was *not* Johan Adam, but Johannes, who died 30 August 1810 in Pickaway County, OH. Johan Adam, brother of Martin Wertman's wife Margaret, died 6 September 1828 in Stark County, OH.

Monnet, not finding any early record of Johannes, incorrectly concluded that he was Johan Adam. Henry Reichelderfer's 1800 Berks County will mentions three sons, but names only two, Michael and Henry. An *unrecorded* 1803 Berks County deed in Mr. Harter's possession names Johannes as the previously unidentified third son.

We now know that these two Wertman wives were first cousins because their fathers, Michael and Johannes, were brothers. This is one example of how errors in poorly researched genealogies often find their way onto the Internet and become fact.

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**Newsletter:** To submit articles for publication,

please contact the President or Historical

Acceptance Committee Chair. Next issue: June '06

# Wertman

Wertman Family Association

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