

Wertman *Lines*

Newsletter of the Wertman Family Association

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Make Your Reunion Plans Now

By 1749, George Philip Wertman had settled in Lynn Twp., Northampton Co. (now Lehigh Co.), PA. Two of his five sons, Michael and Simon, later migrated to the area near Danville, PA. The Wertman Family Association (WFA) returns to Danville this summer, August 21-23, for the annual reunion.

The 2009 Reunion Committee is holding a block of rooms at the Best Western Danville Inn, 79 Old Valley School Rd. for Thursday through Sunday nights, 21-23 August, at the group rate of \$103.99 plus tax. (This is the week of the Little League World Series!) To reserve your room, call the hotel at 570-275-5750 or e-mail the General Manager, Daniel R. Richman, at <bwdanpa@ptd.net>. Be sure to mention that you are with the Wertman Family Reunion (group number 164). Please make your reservations as early as possible; the rooms will be held only until 20 July 2009.

Researchers will meet on Friday, 21 August, at the Mahoning Township Municipal Building, 1101 Bloom Rd. A family dinner will be held Friday evening at Buster's on 587 Valley Rd., followed by a speaker. A picnic on Saturday, catered by Buster's, and the annual business meeting will take place at Saint James United Church of Christ, 2507 Bloom Rd. On Sunday, the group will carpool to Wertman home sites and cemeteries.

Look for reunion details in the June *Wertman Lines* newsletter or on the WFA website, <<http://freepages.genealogy.rootsweb.com/~wertman>>. We look forward to seeing you in Danville 21-23 August.

Russell C. Dannecker, President, WFA,
6th G-Grandson of George Philip Wertman

Save the dates

- 2009 Wertman Family Reunion
- Friday-Sunday, 21-23 August
- Danville, PA

Nominees for Office

The Nominating Committee (Ken Cool, Chair; Shirley Daniels; Lois Wheeler) presents the following slate of officers for election at the 22 August 2009 WFA Business Meeting:

President: Russell Dannecker

Vice President: Frank Strickling

Recording Secretary: Lois Wheeler

Treasurer: Shirley Wertman

Webmaster: Tom Young

Genealogy/Historical Secretary: Jenny Ewing

Board Members: Ken Cool, Mary Ellen Wagner

There are four board members who serve overlapping terms of four years; the other officers serve two-year terms. Any WFA member in good standing may submit one additional nomination for each position to Ken at 260-925-0251 or e-mail <kencool@sbcglobal.net> by 15 July. The nominating committee needs to obtain the consent of each nominee before finalizing the ballot.

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In Search of George Wertman

by Russell C. Dannecker

Wertman researchers are familiar with George Philip Wertman of Lynn Twp., Lehigh Co. PA that our family association refers to as GPI. The "I" designates him as the "founding father" and distinguishes him from five known George Philip Wertmans, never mind the other 24 George Wertmans. But this list of 30 Georges does not include George Wertman b 21 Jun 1805, d 26 Nov 1884, who rests in the Zion Lutheran Church Cemetery, Washington Twp., Pickaway Co. OH. So who is he? That is not easily answered, but let's start with what we know.

Obituary -- George Wertman

"George Wertman, a son of John Wertman, was born in Union county, Pa., June 21, 1805, died November 20, 1884, aged 79 years, 5 months and 5 days. He came to Ohio, in 1814, when this part of the state was still a wilderness -- he has lived to see country rescued from its wildnesses and thickly settled. His family removed to this country in a four horse wagon, that being then the only means of overland transportation. He was married to Susanna Leist, a daughter of John D. Leist, and sister of John D. Leist, of Pickaway county and Henry D. Leist, of Henry county, O., and by her had three children, two sons and one daughter. The sons, David and John, aged 55 and 48 respectively, are still living, and are two of Pickaway county's best citizens. His wife was laid away to rest twelve years ago. There are yet living of his children, two; grandchildren, 13; great grandchildren, 6. Father Wertman, throughout his long life, bore an unblemished reputation as a peaceable and God fearing citizen. He was known only to be esteemed and was for more than sixty years a faithful and exemplary member of the Lutheran church. The funeral which took place on Friday, Nov. 28th, was largely attended by sympathizing friends. The sermon was preached by Rev. Dr. Fishburn, of Stoutsville, from Job 16:22. Rev. J. W. Walkey of Circleville assisted at the obsequies. May he rest in peace." (*Democrat & Watchman*, 1883-84, Marriages and Obituaries, page 114).

County History

"George Wertman came to Ohio from Pennsylvania, in 1814, with his step-father, Andrew Hines,

and his family, who settled in Clear Creek, Fairfield county. Wertman was then a lad of some ten years of age. He learned the trade of potter, serving an apprenticeship of five years, but he never followed the business to any extent. The first purchase of land made by him was in Madison township. This he sold, two years afterward, and then came to Washington and rented, for a few years, the farm which he subsequently bought, and on which he still resides. In 1827, he married Susanna Leist, daughter of David Leist. She died in 1873. Mr. Wertman is now aged seventy-four." (*History of Franklin and Pickaway Counties, Ohio, 1880*)

The Ohio Wertmans

As discussed at last year's reunion in Ashland, OH, there were at least eight Wertman families who came to Ohio. We know the origins of five families, leaving three for which we need connections: (1) Michael Wertman, b ca 1765, who came to Youngstown, Trumbull Co. before 1830; (2) Jacob Wertman, b 08 Feb 1806 in Northumberland Co. PA, who came to Tuscarawas Co. in 1855; and (3) George Wertman, b 21 Jun 1805 in Northumberland (now Union) Co. PA, who came to Pickaway Co. in 1814.

Following the reunion, my eternal companion, Jan, and I traveled to Pickaway, Tuscarawas and Trumbull counties in search of these as-yet-unconnected Wertmans about whom not much is generally known. Our first stop and the one I will cover in this article was Circleville, Pickaway Co., where we met two long-time Wertman family researchers, Brenda and Hal Merz. Brenda is a direct descendant of this George Wertman. They had searched the area for years and were kind enough to show us around the cemeteries and properties.



George Wertman's former farm, August 2008

George Wertman of Pickaway Co., OH and Descendants

I. **George Wertman** b 21 Jun 1805 Union Co. PA, d 26 Nov 1884 Washington Twp. Pickaway Co. OH, m 25 Jul 1828 Pickaway, **Susannah Leist** b 1810 Washington Twp., d 1873 Washington Twp. Both buried Zion Lutheran Church Cemetery, Washington Twp. Two sons, David and John

Wertman is clearly spelled on their tombstone, and the grave had been decorated recently with flowers. To visit the location, enter N039.36.739 longitude and W082.52.125 latitude in your GPS.

I. i. **David Wertman** b 18 Mar 1829 Pickaway, d 13 Dec 1896 OH, of dropsy, m 05 Oct 1856 **Mary Harmon** b 14 Mar 1836, d 10 Mar 1907 Salt Creek Twp., Pickaway. Both buried Zion Cemetery. Seven children -- five daughters and two sons

I. i. 1. **Rose Ellen Wertman** b 1858, d OH, m 28 Dec 1876 Pickaway, **John Wolfe** b/d Pickaway, b 27 Mar 1851, d 14 Apr 1929, son of George Wolfe and Elizabeth Mowery. Both buried Maple Hill Cemetery, Stoutsville, Clear Creek, Fairfield Co., OH. Six children

I. i. 2. **Elizabeth Wertman** b/d/m Pickaway, b 16 May 1863, d 17 Jan 1916, m 09 Oct 1881 **Noah H. Frazier** b 1861 OH. Both buried Maple Hill Cemetery. Eight children

I. i. 3. **Ida Jane Wertman** b/m/d Pickaway, b Sep 1865, d 1927, m 16 Sep 1888, **William M. Fosnaugh** b Sep 1868 OH, d Jan 1951 Fairfield Co.

Both buried Maple Hill Cemetery. Two children

I. i. 4. **Orpha Wertman** b/d Pickaway, b 10 Mar 1868, d 31 Oct 1916 Fairfield Co., m 14 Jul 1895 **Barney Fausnaugh** b 1867, d 30 Jan 1959 Circleville OH. Both buried Maple Hill Cemetery. Three children

I. i. 5. **Mary A. Wertman** b/m Pickaway, b 07 Jan 1872, d 28 Sep 1943 Mt. Sterling, Madison Co. OH, m 04 Jul 1891 **Harvey E. Sells** b 27 May 1871 OH, d 15 Mar 1943 Mt. Sterling, son of David Sells and Caroline Reichelderfer. Three children

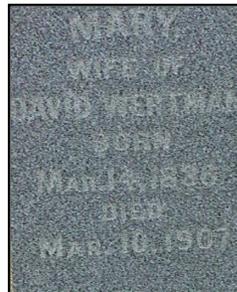
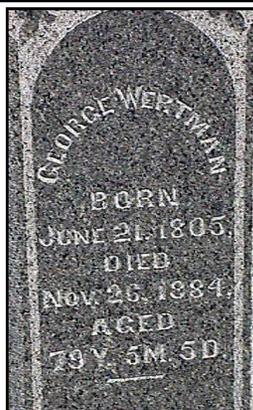
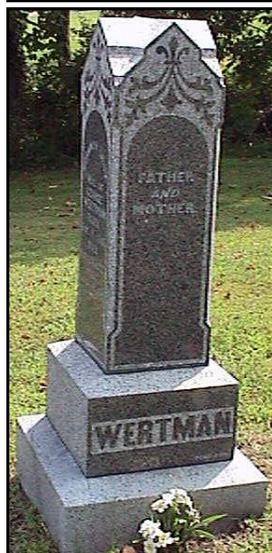
I. i. 6. **George Wertman** b 1874 OH, d 18 Jan 1901 Pickaway, of "la grippe," m 28 Dec 1898 **Florence E. Davis** b 1882. George buried Zion Cemetery near his father, mother, and Wertman grandparents. One child

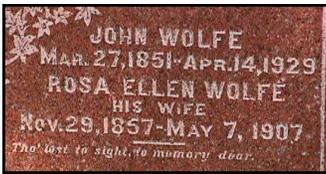
I. i. 7. **John David Wertman** b Oct 1879 Pickaway, d 29 Jan 1963 Stoutsville, m **Mary Etta Cramer** b 1885 Pickaway, d 15 May 1973 Stoutsville. Records indicate they are buried at Maple Hill. Three children

I. ii. **John Wertman** b/d/m Pickaway, b 14 Jul 1836 Washington Twp., d 11 Mar 1924, m 30 May 1858, **Catherine Heffner** b 22 Sep 1837, d 26 Feb 1884 Washington Twp., daughter of David Heffner and Lydia Baer. Both buried Forest Cemetery, Circleville, Pickaway Co. Seven children, four daughters and three sons

I. ii. 1. **Emma Wertman** b/d Pickaway, b 05 Apr 1859, d 19 Oct 1903 of a tumor, buried Forest Cemetery.

Gravestones at Zion Lutheran Cemetery





Tombstones at Maple Hill Cemetery, Stoutsville

I. ii. 2. **Susan Wertman** b/d Pickaway, b 1860, d Nov 1887 of consumption (tuberculosis), buried Forest Cemetery.

I. ii. 3. **Lydia Ann Wertman** b 08 Nov 1860 Circleville, d 25 Oct 1922 Columbus, Franklin Co., m 30 Oct 1884 Pickaway, **Noah Bolender** b 04 Jan 1860 Washington Twp., d 28 Oct 1929 Washington Twp., son of John Bolender. Lydia, Noah, and a daughter are buried at the Hitler/Ludwig Cemetery, Circleville, Pickaway Co. Three children

I. ii. 4. **David H. Wertman** d 20 Nov 1865, aged 6 months 19 days, buried Forest Cemetery.

I. ii. 5. **George Monroe Wertman** b/d Washington Twp., b Jul 1867, d 1933, m 20 Oct 1898 Pickaway, **Ida May Gray** b/d Washington Twp., b 19 May 1871, d 26 Oct 1956, daughter of George Walter Gray and Maria J. Eaton. Both buried Forest Cemetery. Two children. George and Ida May were Brenda Wertman Merz's grandparents.

I. ii. 6. **Catherine Wertman** b/d Washington Twp., b 08 Mar 1871, d Feb 1923, buried Forest Cemetery.

I. ii. 7. **John E. Wertman** b 29 Jun 1873 Washington Twp., d 11 Jun 1906 Pickaway, of suicide, m 13 Sep 1893 Washington Twp., **Bertha E Trimmer** b 27 Dec 1871 IL. Buried Forest Cemetery.

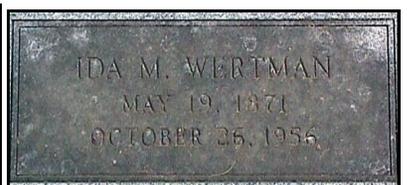
Connections

Tom Young, Brenda Wertman Merz and Hal Merz

George's obituary states that he was born in 1805 in Union Co. PA, and names his father as John. The area that is Union Co. was Northumberland Co. in 1805. We have found no John Wertman who died there during the period his father may have died.

There is a Jacob Wertman who died in 1806 (perhaps Johan Jacob). His wife was Susanna (Schoch/Shuck, we believe). Jacob Wertman is found in the 1800 US Census of Penns Twp., Northumberland Co. PA, listed under Jacob Westman with the following individuals in the household: two males under 10, and one male aged 26 to 44; two females 10 to 15, and one female 26 to 44. This, then, was a family of six, with father and mother between the ages of 26 and 44, plus four children between 2 and 15 years of age. But the family must have grown after 1800, for we know from Jacob's estate that he left five children. Sons George and Jacob Jr. were listed as minors under 14 in 1812.

Next, we find the family in the 1810 US Census, still in Penns Twp., Northumberland Co. Jacob had died; the head of household was Susanna Wertman (Widow). Since George was born in 1805, five years after the previous US Census and one year before his father died, one would expect to find him living with



Markers at Forest Cemetery, Circleville

his mother. But those living with Susanna are two males aged 10 to 15 and two females 16 to 25. Susanna is listed as being between 26 and 44. So where is the fifth child, George, mentioned in Jacob's estate? We are not sure. We are sure we have the correct Susanna Wertman. She is found there in 1810, but gone by 1820. Andrew Hine and his wife, Susanna, sold the Hyne and Wertman land in 1814 to move west. The dates and names fit with the obituary and county history noted above.

Also note the following US Census findings: Andrew Hine 1830 Fairfield Co., OH; Geo. Wertman 1830 Pickaway Co., OH; George Wardman 1840 Pickaway Co., OH.

Here are several connection points that strongly suggest a relationship between Jacob (d 1806) and the Northampton/Berks Wertmans:

1. Simon Wertman is listed as one of the largest creditors of some 25 persons who received payments from Jacob Wertman's estate administration. The loan would have been made before early 1806, and at that time, Simon Wertman had not yet moved from Berks to Columbia Co. Nearly all the other creditors were neighbors living in or near Penn Twp., Northumberland (although some had previously been residents of Northampton/Berks).

2. Jacob Wertman of Penn Twp., Northumberland, is listed as one of the administrators (along with the widow and Phillip Mosser) of the estate of John Schoch (1761-99) who died in Haines Twp., Northumberland (now Centre) Co. In 1799, these families were not "near neighbors," with Penn Twp. being four or five townships east of Haines. Mosser family researchers tell us that Phillip Mosser and John Schoch moved from Lynn Twp., Northampton, to Northumberland in 1789. The suggestion is that Jacob Wertman knew Mosser and Schoch back in the Lynn Twp. area.

3. After Jacob Wertman died, his spouse Susanna married Andrew Hein/Hine/Hyne/Heyn. By matching the birth and death dates (from Ohio graves) of known children of Andrew, we believe he is the same Andrew Heyn active in the Rosenthal New Bethel Church, Albany Twp., Berks Co., during part of the same time that Simon Wertman and his wife were active members. Once again, no proof, but when a spouse died, certainly a common pattern at that time was to marry someone with whom you had previous church or family connections.

4. Numerous families from the Rosenthal New Bethel Church relocated to the specific area of Clear Creek Twp., Fairfield Co. OH and its adjoining Salt Creek Twp., Pickaway Co., between 1800 and 1815. Among these families were Andrew Hein with Susanna and her son George Wertman (1805-84), Stapleton/Stebelton, Reichelderfer, Spangler, Drum/Trum, Boucher/Braucher, Dries/Triess, Strausser, Stump(f), Creutz/Crites, and Bolender, for starters. Local burials include John Stebelton (1774-1838), Martin Wertman's stepson, and his wife Elizabeth Schumacher/Shoemaker (1777-1838).

5. Wertman men in this particular branch were literate, and when they signed their names, consistently spelled it WERTMAN rather than WORTMAN, WARTMAN or WERTHMAN, regardless of how later indexers rendered the name.

Will We Ever Know?

We certainly hope so. If anyone has any additional information about George Wertman's origins please let us know. We pledge to continue to keep looking. Perhaps the answer will come with a DNA sample. There is one volunteer already.

Yet Another George - Wortman

Query

from Kathy Bucher

Several pieces of online Wortman information caught my eye when I noticed the similar names of George, Jacob, Martin, and John. Is there any tie between our George Philip Wertman II, who went to Nova Scotia after fighting with the British during the Revolutionary War, and George Wortman, who had moved earlier from Pennsylvania to Nova Scotia?

According to *Wikipedia* information on Moncton, Canada, "... in 1766 Pennsylvania Deutsch settlers arrived to re-establish the pre-existing farming community at Le Coude. The Settlers consisted of eight families; Heinrick Stief (Steeves), Jacob Treitz (Trites), Matthias Somers, Jacob Reicker (Ricker), Charles Jones, **George Wortman**, Micheal Lutz (Lutes) and George Copple. There is a plaque dedicated in their honor at the mouth of Hall's Creek."

Michelle Stallings has posted a family tree on *Familytreemaker.genealogy.com* showing five sons of **George Wortman** and his wife Mariah:

- i. **Jacob Wortman** b1769 NB, d 1843 Sein, Harrison Co., OH, m bef 1790 Sarah -
- ii. **Martin Wortman** b c1770, d 27 Nov 1839, m 1803 Mary Jane Hopper: settled in Moncton Parish and had 12 children
- iii. **John Wortman** b 1777, d 1847 Salisbury, Westmorland Co., m (1) 1805 Hannah Steeves, m (2) 1840 Elizabeth Rogers
- iv. **Albert Wortman**
- v. **James Wortman**

Wayne Wortman has a George Wortman page, also on *Familytreemaker.genealogy.com*, that states, “**George Wortman** came to Canada in 1776 from Pennsylvania. He had three sons, documented: Jacob, Martin and John.” They were among the first families settling The Bend in Nova Scotia (now Moncton, NB).

Notes on George Wortman 1736-1788

An online entry of 08 Sep 2008 was transcribed by John Clackler from “The Ancestry and Descendants of Mitchell Reed and His Wife, Sarah Foster with Notes on Some Related Families (Shannon, Wortman, Armstrong, and Moore)” Compiled by Arthur Reed Armstrong, Privately Published in Littleton, Colorado, 1967, pg. 89.

“About 1763 the Wortmans and eight other families chartered a vessel and came to Westmorland County..., landing at Hall’s Creek, Moncton... induced to go to New Brunswick by the prospect of large grants of free land. Moncton was settled by people procured by land companies....

“The 1767 census of Moncton listed 60 persons in the township: 4 Irish, 7 Americans, and 49 Germans. By 1788 the Crown Land Surveyor reported there were twelve families living in what is now the parish of Moncton. They had 224 acres of upland cleared, 582 acres of tidal marsh, 19 horses, 84 cows, 54 oxen, 104 young cattle, and 200 sheep.

“George Wortman had died about four months before Stephen Milledge, deputy surveyor of New Brunswick, investigated the state of Moncton Township in 1788. But his widow and three sons were still living on the Petitcodiac River at that time. In 1792 Moriah Wortman petitioned the governor for title to land on the Petitcodiac River. She had previously allowed her [elder] sons to take the grant in their names on their promise to help support the younger children, but she states they forgot their promise....”

Glynnis Wortman on 16 Sep 2008 added, “As a result of limited storage space, each family was restricted to taking the following:

- 2 shovels
- 1 hoe or rake
- 2 saws
- 2 hammers
- 1 barrel of supplies for every three people
- 1 set of harness
- fishing hooks and other fishing equipment
- 2 large balls of twine
- 100 feet of rope

In addition to this, an allotment of approximately 15 feet of light gauge wire for snaring small game was given to each family and each male of twelve years of age and over were allowed one musket or other firearm for hunting.”

Pioneers of Westmorland

Glynnis Wortman also posted this excerpt from the *Chignecto Post* published in Sackville, Westmorland Co., NB, 14 Jan. 1886 (Judge Botsford lecture):

“The next immigrants who settled in Westmorland came to Petitcodiac (West. Co.) They left the Rhine in the year 1749 and proceeded to Pennsylvania, then a British Colony. They ascended the Delaware and purchased and improved lands on the Schuylkill about twelve miles above Philadelphia. After remaining about 14 years they removed to this county under the impression that they could easily obtain large tracts of lands.... They left the Delaware in the year 1763 and touched at Digby, N.S.... a large garrison town. They remained there but a few days and proceeded up the Bay and finally landed at Hall’s Creek (port of Moncton) at that time called Panscada Creek.

“The family’s first winters on the lands of Monckton Township were gruelling as documented by several sources. A letter from William Franklin to his father Benjamin Franklin on Oct. 23, 1867 reports: ‘Mr. Jacob [sic - John] Hall (who keeps a Tavern at the Wheat sheaf near Frankford, and has been lately at Nova Scotia with Settlers for your Company of which he is likewise a Member) complains heavily of the narrow spiritedness and Mismanagement of Mr. Hughes and the other Members. They impowered him it seems to conduct there a Body of Settlers, and to furnish them with such Necessaries as they should have Occasion for till they could subsist

themselves; but tho' he gave them Nothing but what was indispensably [necessary] they refus'd on his Return to acc[ept his] account. This put it out of his Power to return again to Nova Scotia, he having bought Provisions, &c. there on his own Credit. By this means Numbers who had engag'd to accompany Mr. Hall, on his Return, were deterr'd from going, which has greatly retarded the Settlement. And the poor People who were left there last Fall, and who, as they were not yet able to raise any Thing for themselves rely'd on a further Support to be brought by Mr. Hall were during the whole Winter in the greatest Distress imaginable, and must infallibly have starv'd had it not been for Lieut. Gov. Franklin and Capt. Houston an old Settler in that Province, taking Compassion on them. These Gentlemen sent them Supplies from Time to Time in Confidence that the Company were Gentlemen of too much Honour not to repay them.'

"A later letter from surveyor Charles Baker to John Hughes on July 24, 1769 reports with the interesting spelling of the time: 'They beg you would let them have some Working Cattle and Some Cloaths and Provisions untill they will be able to Raise it to themselves which they think will not be long. I think it is a Very Great Pitty that they should be lett Suffer so much as they have done ever since they went there as they are a Set of the Best Settlers in them Parts it has Surprised every one that knew them to see how they have lived since they went there Mostly on Herbs which they gathered in the Marsh in the Spring etc.'"

Another account of Moncton Township settlers 1788 is excerpted from the Westmorland County, NB, site <www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~nbwestmor/cen1788.htm> from *We Lived*, a genealogical newsletter of New Brunswick sources published by Ms. Cleadie B. Barnett, who found the following information in an old typed record in the Reference Section at the Provincial Archives.

"Westmorland, March 18th, 1788...The uniform complaint of the settlers in this township is a want of hardwood, and from my observation in traversing up those Creeks, I believe they are justly founded, - small pines, fir and hackmatack, with a few white birch trees were to be seen, which I am informed (with very few exceptions) is the situation of the land, as high up as the land claimed by the Wortmans', for three or four miles back from the River....

"Jacob Wortman, Martin Wortman and John Wortman: *George Wortman* the father of those three persons came to this country about the same time with the others to settle in this Township, but was disappointed by the proprietors and removed to Hillsbro', after remaining about four years in Monkton. He remained in Hillsbro' until his removal and settlement on the present tract, for which in Novr. 1780, he obtained a Sheriff's Deed, for the damages of £36'15 of '1166 acres of woodland and Interval; Beginning at the first Creek from the Town line at the highest end of Monkton Township, thence extending down the River to the Lowermost end of the Great Interval, then to extend back in a square form to take the number of acres above mentioned.' Shortly after he received this Deed he sold to Joshua Geldart the tract described and bounded as per plan, and about four months since the said George Wortman died, leaving the stock of cattle herein described, and the three sons. Signed, Stepn. Millidge, Depy. Surveyor " A tally for Jacob, Martin and John Wortman showed: Number of years settled, 6; Number of acres cleared upland, 5; Number of acres of diked marsh, 21; plus 8 cows, 6 oxen, 5 young cattle and 3 sheep.

Response

from Tom Young

What I know about this George Wortman group, I learned from others (both directly and via the internet). Several articles claim different migration years. If a memorial in Moncton states their arrival as June 1766, I presume it is correct. Some online sources (always subject to correction) name another son, David.

I found an April 1766 deed where a George Wortman of Haycock Twp., Bucks Co., PA sold land in Moore Twp., Northampton Co., PA. I have always reckoned this was the same fellow who went to Nova Scotia. No wife signed the deed, so perhaps he was unmarried at the time. I had always wondered if he was one of the extra Georges seemingly found in the Lynn Twp. tax lists. Ditto, the George Wortman of the Fort Franklin Petition.

Warren Wortman, publisher of *The Wortman Word*, is running a DNA project at Family Tree DNA. E-mail Warren <Warren@wortman.net> to ask which of his test subjects belong to that clan. Three possible results from the Moncton Wortmans

mismatch us and all tested as Haplogroup R1b1b2. (See DNA article, page 2.) Our results predict some flavor of R1b, so there is still some possibility of a connection.

Google (“George Wortman” Moncton) and you will get a ton of hits. (Some of the information might even be true!)

William W. Wertman on Johnson’s Island

by *Richard Daniels*

Civil War soldier William W. Wertman (Moses, Daniel, Johann Michael, GPI), Company E, 122nd New York Infantry, spent almost a month in Sandusky, Ohio, according to his service records. (See article, January 2008 *Wertman Lines*.) On 14 March 1864, the regiment left Cleveland, went to Columbus and then Sandusky. What would lead this regiment north to stay in an area well away from the fighting?

In “A Compendium of the War of the Rebellion,” author Frederick H. Dyer states that the 122nd NY Infantry was stationed at Johnson’s Island OH in March 1864. What was on Johnson’s Island that would attract an entire regiment? Johnson’s Island was a major Prisoner of War camp for Confederate Officers during the Civil War.

This small island, surrounded by Sandusky Bay and well away from interference by Confederate raiders, appeared to be a perfect place for an interment camp. It is three-fourths of a mile south of where the mainland wraps around Sandusky Bay at Marblehead, OH. In the fall of 1861, the US Army leased 40 acres to establish a Prisoner of War Depot. The island was easy to supply by boat, close to local Union militia in case of trouble, large enough to house some 3,000 prisoners and 1,000 soldiers, and was inhabited by only one family.

During the 40 months the camp was in operation, over 9,000 Confederates (up to 15,000 by some counts) were detained. Early prisoners in February 1862 came from Tennessee – after the capture of Fort Donelson on the Cumberland River and Island 10 in the Mississippi River. Most stayed 12 to 18 months before being exchanged for Union prisoners.

The camp was in contrast to many of the POW camps. Large barracks were almost identical for both the Confederates and their guards, and their food was comparable. The officers had much freedom --

they played games, wrote letters and stories, improvised plays, made camp furniture, and planned escapes. They participated in a branch of the WMCA and had church services led by ministers from Sandusky. It was not an unpleasant place in the warm months, but when the winds of winter blew across Lake Erie, the wood barracks proved cold and the prisoners longed for their warm South.

A few prisoners managed to escape by swimming or stealing a small boat to get to Marblehead or Sandusky, then making their way around Lake Erie to either Detroit or Buffalo and into Canada, where agents would get them back to the South. A few would walk across the ice in winter, crossing 15 miles of Lake Erie to Canadian-owned Pelle Island and another ten miles to Point Pelle on the mainland.

The most interesting escape plan involved 30 Confederates stationed in Canada who wanted to commandeer the USS Michigan, the only Union gunboat on Lake Erie, and free the prisoners on Johnson’s Island. In August 1864, John Yates Beall boarded the steamer Philo Parsons in Detroit with about 30 men from Detroit and Amherstburg, Canada. Beall took control of the small side-wheeler and sailed into Lake Erie. Here he was to board the unsuspecting USS Michigan, over-power the crew, take over the 14-canon gunboat and sail to Johnson’s Island. He would be assisted there by Confederate Capt. Charles H. Cole, posing as an oil company employee, who headed the plan from Sandusky. News of the plan may have been leaked through a Confederate deserter. The USS Michigan was ready. However, probably warned of the leak, Beall and Cole aborted their plan and escaped back into Canada.

Only the Civil War cemetery is left to reflect this period of Johnson’s Island history. There are 206 graves with headstones, but there may be up to 267 burials (a very small number considering the thousands of prisoners kept on the island). Most of the island now is privately owned.

Today’s visitors do not have to travel by boat to Johnson’s Island; a causeway connects it with Marblehead on the mainland. A small museum in Marblehead, opened in 2001, covers various facets of Johnson’s Island history. Besides being an interment camp, the island hosted the Pleasure Resort and was the site of limestone quarrying. The museum is open from Noon to 5:00 p.m. on weekends and holidays from Memorial Day to Labor Day.

About The Wertman Family Association (WFA)

Since 2000, the rejuvenated Wertman Family Association has held annual reunions in Pennsylvania, Ohio, Indiana, and New York. Those who attend learn more about relatives who lived before them, and form relationships with cousins from around the country. A unique feature of these events is a full-day session for researchers to share their discoveries. An earlier family association held reunion picnics in Pennsylvania and Michigan for a large group of relatives in the 1920s and 1930s.

Through the WFA website at <<http://freepages.genealogy.rootsweb.com/~wertman/>>, strangers can discover long-lost family connections. The *Wertman Lines* newsletter and the WFA web pages disseminate accurate information about the family's heritage. In August 2007, the association dedicated a monument in the old graveyard at Ebenezer Union Church in New Tripoli, Lehigh County, PA. The black granite stone is in memory of the Wertman family that came to Lynn Twp. by 1749, including the "founding father," George Philip Wertman, and his five known sons, George Philip, Jacob, Johan Martin, Johan Michael, and Simon.

We invite you to join us!

Officers, Wertman Family Association

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Directors at Large:

Katherine Bucher '11; Shirley Daniels '11;
Mary Ellen Wagner '09; Edwin F. Wertman '09

Historical Acceptance Committee:

Tom Young, Chair <teyoung3@verizon.net>

Newsletter: *Wertman Lines* is issued twice yearly. We welcome articles for publication. Please submit your article by e-mail to the President or the Historical Acceptance Committee Chair. The next issue will be published in June 2009.

Plan now for the annual Wertman Family Reunion 21-23 August 2009 in Danville, PA

Wertman

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