

## INTRODUCTION TO ANCESTRY NARRATIVES

Some months ago my brother, Norbert, asked me why I wrote my biographical sketches of our common ancestors. This is my attempt to answer that question.

I include the genealogies of my parents, Paul Herman Plassmeyer and Monica Francis Melies for assistance in identifying just where a certain ancestor fits into our genealogy.

The short answer to my brother's question is that I am writing them for my grandchildren. I want them to have a ready source of information if they ever want to visit the central Missouri homes of their distant ancestors who settled and lived there. Therefore, in these sketches, I concentrate on basic information such as the locations of their homes, farms and businesses, where they married, how they lived and some glimpses into just who they were. For example, I include the location of where the Schwartzes settled near Westphalia when they arrived in 1836 and where Bernard Heinrich Melies built his house on the bluffs above the Maries River after he arrived in 1846. For glimpses into their lives I include, for example, who and where they married and their interest or lack of interest in education

Most, but not all, of the German settlers in central Missouri landed in New Orleans and traveled up the Mississippi and Missouri Rivers. Many of them continued their travel up the Osage and other tributaries of the Missouri. A few landed on the east coast, traveled overland to the Ohio River and then down to the Mississippi and Missouri Rivers.

If any of my grandchildren are fortunate enough to visit Europe, I include the most accurate information available to me of the European origins of their ancestors and what we know of their voyage to the New World. In many cases we know exactly where they lived before they made their way to America; for others we only know the province or general area where they lived.

But, beyond wanting to give my grandchildren some basic information of the lives of their central-Missouri ancestors, I felt an instinctive interest in discovering who they were, where they came from, why they happened to settle along the Osage, Moreau and Maries rivers and something of their lives and characters.

My grandchildren will never have the experience I had of working in the fields that my great-grandfather cleared and worked and of sitting on the front porch of the farmhouse that he built listening to my grandfather and his brothers talk about their lives on the farm. Of course, even for those of my generation, it was only slowly that we realized that we lived in the house our great-grandfather built, fed cattle and horses in the barns he built, worked in the fields he cleared and climbed the rail fences he built of rails he and his sons split.

Beyond these biographical sketches, I hope to continue by writing something of my own experiences of growing up on the farm my great-grandfather developed along the Maries River. In many ways the lives and experiences of my generation form a bridge between life on the farm

in the 19<sup>th</sup> century and life on the farm in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Even though a tractor was used for the heavy work such as plowing, most of the work on the farm in the 1930s and 1940s was still done by horse and mule just as it was done in the last half of the 19<sup>th</sup> and the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. In both periods, it was a rare morning when at least one team of horses or mules was not harnessed and hitched to a wagon or some farm implement. On the farm and many others, the summer routine of a boy or hired hand going out into the pasture and bringing in the horses before breakfast lasted at least into the late 1940s. Only in the late 1940s did tractor power begin to eclipse horse power, but even then it was a gradual process. To give some idea of what I have in mind, I submit the following:

### Tranquility in the Morning...

In many respects, our lives on the farm were no different from those of our grandfather and great-grandfather. Mornings were often be a time of tranquility especially in the summer when there were no animals in the barns waiting their morning feeding and the dampness of the morning slowed much of the farming activities. The time of putting up hay could be especially tranquil in the mornings for the entire process was governed by not only the weather, but by the morning dew.

Hay was usually cut starting around mid-morning before all of the dew had vanished in the warmth of the sun for then the hay could be cut without shattering the leaves and still not be so damp so as to prevent drying by the early afternoon. The horses were hitched to the mower with one sharp sickle in the mower and one or two sharp sickles carried on the mower to be used as the first became dull from its work of cutting the hay. The horses knew the way to the pasture better than I who was driving them. It was still slightly cool as they pulled the mower along the lane between the still-green corn on one side and the pasture fence on the other. It was a good time for reverie and for looking over the fields that spread up the valley in the neighbors' farms. The horses followed the lane as small spurts of dust rising as their hooves sank into the inch-deep dust joined with the dust raised by the wheels of the mower to create a small cloud trailing the mower.

It was quiet with the only sounds the creaking of the harness, the jangling of the harness chains and the quiet rattling of the mower. The horses followed the lane and stopped at the gate to the pasture wakening me from my reverie. I opened the gate and the horses passed through on their own stopping at my low command of "whoa." After I closed the gate they started at my sharp whistle and light slap of the reins. We continued on the faint track past the rail fence separating the pasture from the corn field on the right. On the left on the top of a low ridge was the slight depression left from the burning of the bricks for construction of the farmhouse. The old apple orchard and line of sycamores stretched along the ditch that drained the broad upland that stretched before us. At a second gate we entered the Adrian pasture, named for the neighboring farmer who had once owned it. We continued along the fading track around the head of the ditch to the open sloping hillside where the hay was to be cut.

Following my father's instructions, I knew just how much hay to cut. The farmers only cut as much hay each morning as they could haul to the barn in the afternoon. They tried to haul as many wagon loads as possible, usually about five or six. But they avoided allowing the cut hay to lie on the ground overnight to get wet from the dampness of the dew.

...and in the Evening

I often found much the same tranquility in the evening as I did in the cutting of hay in the morning. I was not conscious of my interest in the depths of the stories of our distant ancestors as I sat on the cool, concrete floor of the farmhouse porch and listened to Grandfather Martin and his brothers talk. Only slowly did I realize that they had all grown up on the farm, as had my father and now my brothers and I. The oldest of my grandfather's brothers was Henry, who was a Franciscan priest with the ordained name of Theodosius so we knew him as Father Theodosius. Most summers in the 1930s and 1940s, he spent a week or two visiting his family at the farm. Many evenings, the youngest brother named Joseph, who was actually a half-brother to the other two and known to us as Uncle Joe, drove over from his farm in his 1929 Packard open touring car. The three of them sat on the front porch and talked and watched as rabbits fed on the clover in the lower farmyard lot just over the rock wall and barn swallows swooped and darted through the dusk devouring their meal of unsuspecting insects. As it darkened, the lightening bugs floated through the evening air contributing their slow blinking to the evening performance.

They probably did not even notice me as I sat enthralled by their talk of their father and mother, life in the log house where the two older brothers had been born and growing up on the farm. Grandfather and Father Theodosius smoked cigars and Uncle Joe smoked cigarettes. Years later I can still see the glow of the two cigars and one cigarette as they talked into the evening darkness. I don't really remember much of their talk. Much of it was in German, but they talked of their experiences on the farm, of barn-raising, wheat cutting and the one-room, log school their father helped build and they attended. They laughed as they remembered the booming voice of one neighbor whose language toward his mules would not have been acceptable in home or church.

I never tired of listening to them. I only went into the house after Uncle Joe left and Grandfather Martin and Father Theodosius went into the house to go to bed. I can still hear the sound of the screen door closing after them. Only then did I get up and go into the house.

But, more to come later.

Martin L Plassmeyer

March 19, 2014

Colorado Springs, CO

# Pedigree Chart for Paul Herman Plassmeyer

## Paul Herman Plassmeyer

b: 06 Mar 1912 in Westphalia,  
Osage, Missouri, USA  
m: 10 Jun 1935 in St Boniface  
Church, Koeltztown, Osage,  
Missouri, USA  
d: 02 Oct 2000 in Jefferson City,  
Cole, Missouri, USA

## Martin S Plassmeyer

b: 04 Feb 1871 in Westphalia,  
Osage County, Missouri, USA  
m: 04 Jun 1901 in Wardsville, Cole,  
Missouri, United States  
d: 15 Apr 1947 in Westphalia,  
Osage County, Missouri, USA

## Joseph Plassmeyer

b: 07 Mar 1841 in Benteler, Prussia  
m: 06 Feb 1867 in Westphalia,  
Osage, Missouri, United States;  
Marriage  
d: 02 May 1930 in Westphalia,  
Osage, Missouri, USA

## Margaretha Bode

b: 17 Feb 1837 in Rochester, New  
York, USA  
d: 13 Feb 1882 in  
Westphalia, Osage, Missouri, USA

## Johan Heinrich Plassmeyer born Nienkemper

b: 01 Jan 1808 in Mastholte,...  
m: 10 Feb 1835 in Wadersloh,...  
d: 08 Dec 1868 in Westphalia,...

## Maria Elizabeth Heckemeyer

b: 08 Oct 1808 in Mastholte,  
Gutersloh, Prussia  
d: 29 Nov 1890 in Westphalia,  
Osage, Missouri, United States

## Johann Bernard Bode

b: 12 Mar 1808 in Erkelin, Hoxter,  
Prussia  
m: 26 Jan 1836 in Rochester,,New  
York, USA  
d: 16 Feb 1879 in Westphalia,  
Osage, Missouri, USA

## Margaret Clara Ries

b: 28 Sep 1809 in Gamburg ab  
Tauber, Baden-Wuerttemberg  
d: 29 Apr 1858 in Westphalia,  
Osage, Missouri, United States

## Ignatz Heislen

b: 07 Mar 1811 in Alsace, France  
m: 12 May 1846 in Taos, Cole,  
Missouri, USA  
d: 25 Jul 1899 in Wardsville, Cole,  
Missouri, United States

## Elizabeth Pequignot

b: 1816 in Doubs, Franche-Comté,  
France  
d: 1905 in Wardsville, Cole,  
Missouri, United States

## Peter P. Heislen

b: Abt. 1849 in Taos, Cole, Missouri  
m: 16 Nov 1877 in Taos, Cole,  
Missouri, USA  
d: 17 Jun 1905 in Taos, Cole,  
Missouri, USA

## Anna Catherine Heislen

b: 08 Nov 1879 in Taos, Cole,  
Missouri, United States  
d: 15 Apr 1967 in Jefferson City,  
Cole, Missouri, United States of  
America

## Mary Angela Hagner

b: 09 Feb 1854 in Wardsville, Cole,  
Missouri, United States  
d: 1931 in Jefferson  
City, Cole, Missouri, USA

## John Hermann Hagner

b: 1825 in Holthausen, Meppen,  
Hannover  
m: 11 Apr 1853 in  
Taos, Cole, Missouri, USA  
d: 1875 in  
Wardsville, Cole, Missouri, USA

## Anna Margaretha Catherina Prenger

b: 25 Feb 1833 in Neuringe,  
Hannover  
d: 29 May 1919 in  
Wardsville, Cole, Missouri, USA

# Pedigree Chart for Monica Francis Melies

## Monica Francis Melies

b: 29 Mar 1911 in Koeltztown, ,  
Missouri, USA  
m: 10 Jun 1935 in St Boniface  
Church, Koeltztown, Osage,  
Missouri, USA  
d: 04 Nov 1974 in Plassmeyer  
Farm, Osage, Missouri, USA

## Bernard H Melies

b: 15 Jan 1868 in Koeltztown,  
Osage, Missouri  
m: 04 May 1897 in St Boniface  
Church, Koeltztown, Missouri, USA  
d: 05 Aug 1955 in  
Koeltztown, Missouri, USA

## Bernhard H Melies

b: 10 Nov 1821 in Mastholte,  
Gutersloh, Prussia; Now in Nord-  
Rhein Westphalen Germany  
m: 11 Nov 1858 in St Joseph  
Church, Westphalia, Osage,  
Missouri St Joseph Church  
d: 12 Aug 1886 in Westphalia,  
Osage, Missouri, USA

## Maria Johanna Schwartz

b: 20 Mar 1838 in Westphalia,  
Osage, Missouri, USA  
d: 24 Jan 1916 in Koeltztown,  
Osage, Missouri, USA

## Johann Caspar Melies

b: 01 Mar 1795 in Mastholte?,...  
m: 16 Jul 1817 in Mastholte,...  
d: 30 Apr 1866 in Mastholte,...

## Anna Gertrud Gersmeyer

b: 1788 in Langenberg, Gutersloh,  
Prussia  
d: 03 Feb 1842 in Mastholte,  
Gutersloh, Prussia; Now in Nord-  
Rhein Westphalen Germany

## Gottfried Schwartz

b: 16 Dec 1805 in Oelde,  
Warendorf, Prussia  
m: 1829 in Oelde, Warendorf,  
Prussia  
d: 1843 in Westphalia, Osage,  
Missouri, USA

## Maria Gertrude Kramer

b: 09 Mar 1807 in Oelde,  
Warendorf, Prussia  
d: 30 Dec 1897 in Koeltztown,  
Osage, Missouri, USA

## Christoph Woehr

b: 07 Jan 1786 in Weissenstein,  
Goeppingen, Wurtemberg  
m: 02 Jul 1810 in Wiessenstein?  
Goeppingen, Wuerttemberg  
d: 18 Oct 1852 in Weissenstein,  
Goeppingen, Wurtemberg

## Maria Catharina Fritz

b: 13 Nov 1784 in Donzdorf,  
Goppingen, Wuerttemberg,  
d: 31 Mar 1846 in Weissenstein,  
Goeppingen, Wurtemberg

## Joseph Woehr

b: 07 Mar 1825 in Weissenstein,  
Goppingen, Württemberg  
m: 20 Jun 1853 in St Louis,  
Missouri, USA  
d: 29 Nov 1908 in Koeltztown,  
Osage, Missouri, United States

## Anna Agnes Woehr

b: 20 May 1875 in  
Koeltztown, Missouri, USA  
d: 15 May 1947 in  
Koeltztown, Missouri, USA

## Caroline Wilhelmina Uetrecht

b: 19 Nov 1836 in Destel, Minden-  
Lubbecke, Prussia  
d: 10 Sep 1927 in Koeltztown,  
Osage, Missouri, United States

## August Wilhem Uetrecht

b: 20 Mar 1807 in Destel?, Prussia  
m: 04 Apr 1836 in Levern, Prussia  
d: Destel, Prussia

## Hanna Sophie Hohlt

b: 10 Mar 1816 in Mehnen, Prussia  
d: