
Dreisbach Family Association

April 2010 Newsletter



Joy and Prosperity 'Hex' Sign

From: Zook Family Crafts www.padutch.com/hexsigns.shtml

A Great Story from the Martin Dreisbach Line

Thanks to Ann Wohlheuter, Dreisbach Family Association genealogist, for sending this fascinating story!

Martin's eldest surviving son, Jacob, probably intended to move to Ohio, but died before they could go, and was buried in the family plot in the DREISBACH Cemetery outside of Lewisburg, Union Cy, PA. His widow, Magdalena (BUCHS) moved out to Ohio in the early 1800s with her 12 surviving children. A daughter, whose name we do not know yet, died in PA.

Jacob's next-to-youngest son, Jonathan, must have been a rebellious youth. He and his "companion," Susanna or Anna Susan EYESTONE, had a son William born in 1818, but they didn't marry. (I don't know why they didn't; she never married, and he didn't marry anyone until 3 years later.) But at any rate, he apparently grew up and became a more responsible adult. He and his brother

George, who lived on adjoining farms although Jonathan lived in Fairfield Cy & George in Pickaway Cy, both donated some of their adjoining lands for a church and cemetery in which their mother and eventually they and their families were buried. Also, later on, both Jonathan & George donated some money for the construction of Otterbein College in Westerville, Ohio. But what makes me proudest of him is the fact that before and during the Civil War Jonathan let his barn be used as a station on the Underground Railway. Some of the fugitive slaves were guided there by Rev. John Dresbach, who lived about 3 miles away and was taking them to the barn of his first cousin! So Jonathan turned out to be a good guy, after all.

Jonas, Jacob's youngest son, was the first to move from Ohio to Illinois, settling in Fulton County. Unfortunately, all of his known children, 3 sons, died young there. One married and had a daughter, who died unmarried. So his line is dead.

John Johnston DRESBACK (his generation was the first to use this spelling of the name) was Jonathan's eldest surviving son. He also moved out to Illinois, settling in Macon County, with his family. He had 4 daughters & 2 sons. The second daughter died in infancy in Ohio. The 2 sons and the third daughter died in their teens, leaving only the eldest daughter (who became my great-grandmother) and the youngest. A photo I have of him shows a man with a black beard, so I like to think of him as "Black Jack."

Joseph DRESBACK was Jonathan's youngest son. He was the one who brought the notoriety to the family. But his story is still incomplete, awaiting what Paul Harvey used to call "the end of the story," which I hope to have soon. What I have comes from newspaper articles on the trial. He was very good-looking, a fact that was frequently mentioned in the newspapers, and obviously all the girls knew it, and he knew it too.

He and his wife, Emily PATRICK, had no children, but he seems to have felt the need to prove that it wasn't his fault. And Emily was a jealous woman. Joe had affairs with several girls and women, including the girls hired as kitchen help. One day a baby boy was found on their front doorstep. Joe & Emily took him in, though I believe Emily wasn't too happy about it. In 1874 Emily died, probably of arsenic poisoning. (Every farmhouse had arsenic around to kill rats, but it wasn't supposed to be used on wives.) She died crying, "It's Joe's fault! He killed me!"

When he went to trial 7 years later (It took that long for her brothers to have the case brought to court!), everyone sat in the courthouse just like at a wedding, his family & friends on one side, hers on the other. Poor Jane, his sister, who was married to a PATRICK, one of Emily's brothers, was torn between the two. People testified for and against Joe. The DRESBACKs all said that it was happy marriage, the PATRICKs said that it wasn't, due to Joe's philandering. Finally, the decision was -- GUILTY!

Question: Did Joe kill Emily? Maybe, maybe not. Though Emily & her brothers said he did, there were other suspects. Who? The kitchen help, another Emily, who was probably the baby's mother. Another suspect was the next kitchen help, Sarah, who later married Joe.

Those two may have thought that getting the wife out of the way would let them marry. And then there was the doctor. He probably didn't murder Emily, but he could have caused her death. He was often accused of DWI, Doctoring While Intoxicated, and many people in court testified that he had caused someone's death and had almost caused someone else's but that lucky person stopped taking the medication he had prescribed. And the last suspect was Emily herself. It was brought out that the females in her family were all erratic and mentally unstable. I wouldn't put it past her to have poisoned herself just to put Joe in prison for her murder.

Next question: Did Joe go to prison, and for how long? For this, I need to read more newspaper articles on him. If he did go to prison, it would have been in Columbus, but not for many years. He married Sarah (remember her?) in 1886 and had at least 2 more children before he died of cancer in 1896. So I need to do much more research in Fairfield County, Ohio, before I can finalize this story. Keep tuned.

Ann Wohlheuter

(Melanie Warman added that Rev Dresbach was part of the underground railroad and that Joe went to jail, something no one talked about for years.)

Martin Dreisbach Line Men Needed for DNA Project

The Dreisbach DNA Project desperately needs male participants from the Martin Dreisbach line. Currently it has NO DNA samples from any man who belongs to the Martin Line! This means that connections to the Martin Line can not be proven or disproven - a huge hole. Please consider joining the DNA Project. It's easy and non-invasive. To become a part of the project or for more information contact the Dreisbach DNA Project administrator at:

dreisbachfalconer@gmail.com

Wittgenstein Comes to the DFA Reunion!

No matter how we spell our last name, most of us can draw a line back to Wittgenstein, Germany. However, very few of us have actually visited Wittgenstein to see where our ancestors lived and to meet distant relatives.



Wedding photo of Dagmar and Martin

Fortunately two guests from Wittgenstein, Martin and his wife, Dagmar, will attend the reunion! Martin is a descendant of Georg, son of Abraham of Balde (1535-after 1575), the progenitor of many Dreisbach lines. Georg had two sons. One was Daniel (1580 - after 1630) whose descendants eventually became the Martin (1717-1799) line as well as the Christian 'Oscar' (1864-1936) line. The other son was Johan. He had a son, also called Daniel (1623-1685) - who is the most recent common ancestor for both modern day Martin and the Simon (1698-1785) line.

So we are related to modern day Martin Dreisbach through ancestors who lived between 1560 and 1615. That's a long time ago. But modern day Martin remains closely linked to us. He is part of the Dreisbach DNA Project and his DNA is essentially identical to all of the known Abraham of Balde descendants!

Be sure to say "Hello" to Martin and Dagmar when you are at the reunion. They've come a long way and we want them to know they're part of the family.

KUTZTOWN FOLK FESTIVAL

July 3 to July 11, 2010

You might want to make a trip to Kutztown, PA (midway between Allentown and Reading) to see the Kutztown Folk Festival. The festival, held on the Kutztown fairgrounds, aims to introduce people to the Pennsylvania Dutch culture. There are demonstrations of old time farming methods, barn raising, quilting and more. There is even a mock Penna. Dutch wedding and a mock funeral - and of course Penna. Dutch food including funnel cakes and shoofly pie. It's one way of experiencing, just a bit, how our ancestors lived.

Dreisbach Family Reunion June 18, 19 and 20th

**At St Peter's Tohickon Church
Perkasie, PA.**

For information and registration form go to:

<https://sites.google.com/site/dreisbach2010familyreunion/>

Hope to see you there!



Marcia Dreisbach Falconer