

Ressler Genealogy

All the information that I have managed to gather (at least that I'm willing to share with others) is on my website:

<https://illuminated.duckdns.org/genealogy>

Where there is information I don't wish to share with the entire world (particularly information about living people), there will be a username and password required. In all cases these are

username: Ressler
password: Gru6e1901

(Grandfather's nickname with "g" changed to "6" and his birth year.)

Feel free to contact me at any time with questions, requests, updates, or new information at mike.ressler@pm.me.

Following are a few of the "interesting" characters in our ancestry.

The Martyrs

Thanks to the Mennonite background of our grandmother Anna (Zimmerman), we are firmly connected to all the Anabaptist background of Lancaster County.

Hans Landis

1. Landis, Hans m. Hochstrasser, Margareth
2. Landis, Margareth m. Bauman, Rudolph
3. Bauman, Hans Rudolf m. Funck, Anna
4. Bauman, Wendell m. Coopersmith, Anna
5. Bauman, Anna m. Weaver, Jacob (Weber)
6. Weber, Anna m. Rutt, Christian W.
7. Rutt, Barbara W. m. Zimmerman, Christian W.
8. Zimmerman, Anna R. m. Martin, Peter F.
9. Martin, Maria Z. m. Zimmerman, Christian W.
10. Zimmerman, Christian F. IV m. Martin, Mary W.
11. Zimmerman, Martin M. m. Martin, Magdalena N.
12. Zimmerman, Anna Martin m. Ressler, Daniel Grube
13. Ressler, Elvin Jay m. Pawling, Jeanne Sandra
14. Ressler, Michael Elvin

Horgenberg near Hirzel [which we visited in 2018] was the birthplace of Hans Landis, a Mennonite preacher who died as a martyr on 29 September 1614, in his seventieth



year. He left a large family. His wife Margaretha Hochstrasser was 60 years old and stood loyally at his side. The father's steadfastness engraved itself deeply into the hearts of his children, who preserved his spiritual legacy for the most part, resisting the pressure of the government on their faith. His son Felix died in prison in 1642 in consequence of inhuman treatment, but Felix's wife Adelheid Egli managed to escape after four years. Another son, Hans, married to Elisabeth Erzinger, was also a preacher; his daughter Margaretha lay in prison with him for 60 weeks. The martyr's daughter Verena was married to the weaver Jacob Suners of Holland(?); she died in prison at Zürich in 1643 at an advanced age in consequence of maltreatment (Mart. Mir. D 822, E 1121), one of the last victims of the persecution of the Zurich Swiss Brethren. Through Hans Suner, probably a son of Jacob Suner, frequent relief offerings of the Dutch Mennonites passed to the Swiss Brethren.

After the execution of Hans Landis the Zurich council decided to confiscate Anabaptist property without respite. On 22 October 1614, it ordered the confiscation of the property of exiles. The property left by Hans Landis was indeed promised to his wife and children on 23 February 1615, but only on the condition that they join the state church within two weeks. Otherwise they could expect only exile and loss of property. Since the sorely tried widow could not make such a promise she was "laid in bonds" on 24 May. The Reformed preacher tried to win her to his church in prison. It is not known how long she was held. Her children were at first intimidated, but finally most of them decided to stay with the Swiss Brethren. The government then confiscated the property and put dependent members of the family among strangers. About 1640 the property of Rudolf, Hans, and Felix Landis, all sons of the martyr, was sold.

The descendants of the martyr Hans who were loyal to the faith of their fathers left the country. Some of them settled in Alsace (especially in the Rappoltstein region). The first mention of the family in the Palatinate occurred on 2 March 1661, when a group of 50 persons was surprised at an evening meeting at Steinsfurt near Sinsheim on the Elsenz; they were heavily fined. Among them were Hans Heinrich Landes of Rohrbach, his son Rudolf Landes of Weiler, and his mother and sister.

George Weber

1. Weber, George m. Schnebli, Elsbeth
2. Weber, Heinrich Schnebli m. Ruggin, Elsbeth Ruegg
3. Weber, Johann Anton m. Herr, Maria Margaretha
4. Weber, George H. m. Good, Barbara (Guth)
5. Weber, Hans G. m. Siegrist, Feronica
6. Weber, Barbara S. m. Zimmerman, Christian M.
7. Zimmerman, Christian W. m. Martin, Maria Z.
8. Zimmerman, Christian F. IV m. Martin, Mary W.
9. Zimmerman, Martin M. m. Martin, Magdalena N.
10. Zimmerman, Anna Martin m. Ressler, Daniel Grube
11. Ressler, Elvin Jay m. Pawling, Jeanne Sandra
12. Ressler, Michael Elvin

Listed in Martyrs Mirror, p1113-4 in my copy:

Note – A. D. 1639 there was also apprehended the Brother George Weber, an old man, from the county of Kiberg. The same was also taken to Zurich, into the convent Othenbach, and there fed on bread and water.

Finally, through the hardships and long duration of his imprisonment, he became greatly impaired in his body, and fell into a severe sickness, after he had been confined there seventy weeks.

Afterwards, through some of his fellow prisoners, who opened the prison, he was released, but never again recovered his property.

As regards the homestead of this George Weber, as also that of Jacob Egly, the owners of the same must each annually pay therefor to the authorities five hundred guilders.

From Pennsylvania Mennonite Heritage, April 1990 Vol XIII No 2: George Weber, Anabaptist of Albis and Baretswil

The earliest known record of George Weber, also called Klei Jörg Weber or Wäber (WB), Anabaptist, is on January 7, 1621, in the church book of Hirzel, Canton Zurich, Switzerland, when he and his wife, Elsbeth Schnebli, had a son, Heinrich (WB2), baptized. There is no further record of this family in Hirzel, where seven years earlier Hans Landis (LS3) had been beheaded for his Anabaptist faith.

In 1633 Klei Jörg Weber, aged fifty-five, was recorded on the list of Anabaptists in Canton Zurich. This is his first record at Müllikraam, now called Mühlegram at Neuthal, in the parish of Baretswil, in the mountainous Oberland on the east side of Lake Zurich. The pastor noted that he was a widower with children, Sara (WB1), aged sixteen, and Jörg (WB3), aged ten, had been separated from his wife for several years before her death, and had come three years before from Albis, a mountain range west of Lake Zurich.

In 1634 he lived at Mühlegram with son Heinrich, aged fifteen, and a servant from Swabia, Germany. In 1639 he was imprisoned at Oethenbach, a cloister in the city of Zurich, for seventy weeks. The 1640 census of Baretswil shows he was in Zurich, and his son Heinrich Weber was living in Hinter Gryffenberg, now called Hinterberg, with the Uli Rüeegg family, whose daughter, Elsbeth, was married the next year to Heinrich Weber. In 1649 Jörg Weber, Anabaptist widower, lived in Mühlegram with his son Heini, his son's wife, Elsbeth Rueegg, and their five children.

Looking at people this far back produces lots of conflicting information. The previous quote suggests that George was a “widower with children”, but this source (original source not known) suggests they were divorced:

... At the time the Baretswil Anabaptist congregation was a large and active one which Heidegger claimed was meeting in the attic of a farmhouse belonging to Barbara Peter, the common-law wife of Heinrich Egli. Anabaptist marriages were not recognized by the Reformed Church - hence the use of the term common law.” ... Heidegger describes

many other Anabaptists in the neighborhood, but he pays particular attention to Klein Jörg (Little George) Weber, aged fifty-five years, who he says moved to Bäretswil in 1639 from Albis across the Lake of Zürich. He is divorced from his wife, who we therefore assume is adamantly not an Anabaptist. She is listed as still living, and he, naturally, has not remarried.

The minister notes that Klein Jörg is also the father of two children—Sara, aged sixteen years, and Georg, aged ten years—and owns a large estate called Müikranni, which he may be forced to sell. The reason for this forced sale, we discover, is that he is the Georg Weber mentioned in the Martyrs' Mirror who was imprisoned at Oethenbach for seventy weeks and was fined heavily by the Zürich authorities. The sale of Müikranni is evidently related to the fine he owes the state. His son Georg is evidently the father of the Hans Anton Weber who came to Lancaster County about 1711, died there in 1724, and left the four sons who now very much form a part of local history.

Already from this material alone one can perceive that the very nature of the Anabaptist persecution split families and forced people to submit to marital arrangements which today we may not condone. It also scattered families by forcing them to move from place to place, for once they had lost economic security, they were forced like Jacob Egli to live off the goodwill of relatives and friends. Minister Heidegger recorded the information that Georg Weber came from Albis, which is very near Horgen, where the Landis family originates. The report of 1641 is ominous because of its being only a prelude to a further purge of Anabaptists which took place in Zürich in 1651. ...

Martin Meili

1. Meili, Martin m. Bär, Anna
2. Meili, Elsbeth m. Kundig, Hans Jagli
3. Kendig, Susanna m. Groff, Hans Conrad
4. Groff, Peter m. Unknown, Barbara
5. Groff, Barbara m. Martin, Martin M.
6. Martin, Christian m. Eby, Magdalena
7. Martin, Daniel Eby m. Weber, Anna Stouffer
8. Martin, Amos W. m. Nolt, Esther W.
9. Martin, Magdalena N. m. Zimmerman, Martin M.
10. Zimmerman, Anna Martin m. Ressler, Daniel Grube
11. Ressler, Elvin Jay m. Pawling, Jeanne Sandra
12. Ressler, Michael Elvin

Martin is also mentioned in the Martyr's Mirror on page 1110. Another writer describes him:

Martin Meili was baptized as an infant on December 26, 1607 in Birmensdorf. After the death of his first wife, Katharina Wintsch, Martin met and married Anna Bar, an Anabaptist. The 1637 census of Stalikon lists him as an "Anabaptist who allowed himself to be carried over by his wife" referring to Anna Bär. They must have been secretly married by the leaders within the Anabaptist movement because the birth of

their first child, Elsbeth Meili, it is stated that she was generated by an unconsecrated marriage. Thus their marriage was never recognized by the state church.

On May 3, 1639, Martin Meili was imprisoned at Zurich; he escaped on Good Friday in the year 1641. His wife, Anna Bär, was imprisoned from 1638 to 1641. After her imprisonment, she moved to the Palatinate. All the children were placed in different homes. On March 28, 1649, Martin Meili secretly stole his son, Jakob, from his foster father with knowledge of the foster family. By 1650, Martin lived in Duhren, Germany.

In 1658, he wrote accounts of the persecution of the Zurich Anabaptists that were included in the Martyrs Mirror and the 1742 Ausbund.

Heroes and Rascals

I obtained a family Bible that was up in the attic after Anna Mae passed away in 2012. It is a Harding Medium Edition, published in Philadelphia in 1860. It belonged to the family of our great-great-grandmother Martha (Sechrist) Ressler, most likely her sister Mary, as the initial entries on the family pages are for Henry M. Weiler and Mary M. Sechrist. Presumably it was passed on to Martha at some point who then passed it down to us.

There was a curious entry at the end of the family pages:

Grandmother Metzger died Oct. 18th 1870. Aged 92 years, 8 months and 10 days.

Grandfather Metzger died March 15th 1843. Aged 74 years, 5 months and 18 days.

After some sleuthing, I was able to identify “Grandmother” and “Grandfather” Metzger as George Frederick Metzger and Catharine Tanger. From them, we have two more interesting connections.

Jacob Metzger

1. Metzger, Jacob m. Rudisill, Susanna
2. Metzger, George Frederick m. Tanger, Catharine
3. Metzger, Susannah m. Sechrist, Jacob
4. Sechrist, Martha (Magdalena) m. Ressler, Isaac Franklin Sr.
5. Ressler, Isaac Franklin Jr. m. Spotts, Ella Margaret
6. Ressler, Daniel Grube m. Zimmerman, Anna Martin
7. Ressler, Elvin Jay m. Pawling, Jeanne Sandra
8. Ressler, Michael Elvin

We have a number of Revolutionary War soldiers in our ancestry; here is one who was an officer:

Jacob Metzger was born February 26, 1733 or 1734 in Wurttemberg, Germany, and died July 08, 1790 in Conestoga Center, Lancaster Co, PA. He married Susanna Rudesille November 27, 1764 in Trinity Church, Conestoga Twp, PA, daughter of Phillip

Rudisill and Susanna Beyer. She was born October 19, 1744 in Lancaster Co, PA, and died February 1827 in Lancaster Co, PA.

Notes for Jacob Metzger: Information Source: "The Tanger-Metzger Genealogy", 1954. The Tanger-Metzger Genealogy states that Jacob "purchased a 100-acre farm in Conestoga Township on May 7, 1764, from Andrew and Barbara Fail, and is listed in tax lists there in 1771, 1772, 1773, 1779 and 1781. He was an overseer of the poor in Conestoga Township in 1775 and an auditor in 1782, 1788, 1789 and 1790.

"Jacob Metzger served in the militia during the American Revolution. His service as a captain of the third company of the fourth battalion of Lancaster County militia extended from 1777 to 1783. Although there were other Lancaster Countians named Jacob Metzger living during this period, none of them lived in Conestoga Township; the men of the third company have been identified as Conestoga soldiers.

"Following an illness of several months, Jacob Metzger died on July 8, 1790. He was buried July 10, by the Reverend Gotthilf Henry Ernst Muhlenberg, pastor of Trinity Lutheran Church, who made the notation, "A true man," on his record. The burial was in a private cemetery, now the graveyard of the Conestoga Center Reformed (formerly Lutheran) graveyard at Conestoga Center, Lancaster County, Pennsylvania. A large tombstone erected over his grave bears this inscription in German:

Here rest the bones of Jacob Metzger. He was born February 26, 1734. United in marriage with Susanna, nee Rudisille, 1764. Produced with her 4 children, Died July 8, 1790."

Christoph Denger

1. Denger, Christoph m. Stumkeller, Anna Cathrina
2. Dengert, Andrew Andreas m. Lüttman, Anna Catharina
3. Tanger, Catharine m. Metzger, George Frederick
4. Metzger, Susannah m. Sechrist, Jacob
5. Sechrist, Martha (Magdalena) m. Ressler, Isaac Franklin Sr.
6. Ressler, Isaac Franklin Jr. m. Spotts, Ella Margaret
7. Ressler, Daniel Grube m. Zimmerman, Anna Martin
8. Ressler, Elvin Jay m. Pawling, Jeanne Sandra
9. Ressler, Michael Elvin

We have hymn singing in our blood, though I'm not sure this is a particularly good example:

The following is extracted verbatim from the "Tanger-Metzger Genealogy with a record of the descendants of John and Catherine (Metzger) Tanger, 1773-1950" by Frederick S. Weiser (Gettysburg, Penn., 1955). pages 1-2.

... subsequent records of their [Christoph & Anna's] children indicate that Christoph became a citizen of Appenhofen, a village of perhaps two hundred inhabitants, so small that it could not support its own church. It did, however, have an inn, or tavern, named the "Grüner Baum," or "Green Tree," of which Christoph was keeper.

Not all of Christoph's friends were good ones, however; for he encountered some difficulty which led to his arrest, trial, and hanging. Unfortunately, only the index of the trial records has been preserved. It states that on January 8, 1749, the trial of Christoph Denger of Appenhofen and of George Nicholas Lindenmeyer of Schwanhain was initiated, and the sentence passed on January 18, that both, "for well-deserved punishment and to serve as an awful example to others of their kind are to be executed by the rope from life to death."

The exact nature of the crime is undisclosed, but it should be remembered that many more crimes were punishable by death at that time than now. It seems possible that, in the course of innkeeping, Christoph had occasion to befriend or protect thieves. His death was within the Church, however, and the pastor at Billigheim made a lengthy notation in the Lutheran parish records which sheds more light on the hanging:

Christoph Dengert, former citizen and innkeeper of the "Green Tree" at Appenhofen, who was tempted by the devil and his helpers to associate with thieves, after having been imprisoned at Klingemuenster since the 3rd day after Whitsunday (June 4, 1748) of last year, together with another one was fetched on March 11 of this year and brought to Germersheim, where, according to sentence and right, he was hanged on the 13 inst. his name-day. (But St. Christopher's Day is March 15.) Thank God, who blessed him with much joy and fortitude of faith. The previous day, to prepare him for his way, from my hands he received the Lord's holy supper. During the leading out, which lasted for 4 whole hours, because the Catholic delinquent, whom we didn't see before arriving at the place of execution, marched very slowly, more than 20 of the finest Evangelical Lutheran hymns with application, etc., were sung and when entering the circle it was intonated, "Now we are praying to the Holy Spirit," but only the first verse of it was sung. After the publishing of the sentence, upon my request he thanked the Lord and our most gracious sovereign and repeatedly recommended to me his wife and children, that the latter should be raised in his religion which is so much a consolation to him. Whereupon under constant cheering up he died without much pain!

Yep, that's our blood!

The Blackest of Sheep

There is one recent ancestor I'm definitely not proud of—our great grandfather (or not so great as the case might be) Isaac Franklin Ressler, Jr., AKA Frank Isaac Ressler.

Isaac Franklin Ressler, Jr.

1. Ressler, Isaac Franklin Jr. m. Spotts, Ella Margaret
2. Ressler, Daniel Grube m. Zimmerman, Anna Martin
3. Ressler, Elvin Jay m. Pawling, Jeanne Sandra
4. Ressler, Michael Elvin

From the O'er Stormy Seas book:

... Around 1898, Ella had married and began raising a family with Isaac Franklin Ressler Jr., son of a Manheim Township blacksmith. Ella and “Frank” rented a house in New Holland. Here Frank tried—without much conviction—to earn a living performing odd jobs. He was fond of “the drink” his descendants would recall, spending too much of what little he earned in local taverns. Ella was hardly a paragon of virtue, herself, and her less-than-sterling reputation took a further hit when she began working in the New Holland Hotel bar. Her social sympathies are suggested by the fact that when she delivered a son on July 29, 1901, she named him after New Holland Hotel bartender Daniel Grube.

Ella and Frank stayed together—at least off and on—for another dozen years or so ... Sometime in this mid-teens Grube returned to New Holland and his mother’s chaotic household. By that time, father Frank had slipped off to Lancaster City where he would spend the rest of his life scraping by on odd jobs when he wasn’t lost in an alcoholic haze.

A booklet on the Spotts family paints an even worse picture of Frank (and a somewhat more positive one of Ella):

Aunt Ella was married twice—to Frank Isaac Ressler, who died July 7, 1943, and to Martin M. Kurtz, who died June 9, 1953.

Like her sister and brothers she had to go to work when she was only nine. Within a year she was helping to milk twenty cows. For one year she worked on Uncle John’s farm in Chester County. Her first child, Pearl, was born before she was nineteen. She left her baby with her mother and went to New Holland to work as a cook at the New Holland House. While she was working there she was married to Frank Ressler of New Holland, who worked for the Telephone Company. The story of the first fifteen years of her married life is almost incredible. Although her husband was a good worker, he spent practically all that he earned on liquor. When he was intoxicated he abused Aunt Ella beyond description. But he was her husband and she endured what was virtually hell.

Even a book about the history of the New Holland Farm Machine Company mentioned his alcoholism. Another of his sons, Robert (brother of Grube), was described this way:

It was at the time when folks joked that the New Holland Machine Company ran on baseball. That was a stretch but there was a company-sponsored softball team that played in the very active local Industrial League where Bob Ressler was discovered by Marburger. Ressler was a local boy who served a machinist’s apprenticeship when he finished grade school. He had earnestly wanted to go on to high school but family finances forced him to go to work instead. His alcoholic father was gone and his mother struggled to keep food on the table.

Flights of Fancy

Maybe??? I'm pretty confident of generations 16 through 27 thanks to the Swiss Anabaptist Genealogical Association (SAGA) database, and a book on the Snively/Snavely family is confident of generations 3 through 16, so maybe this is mostly real?

1. von Luternau, Werner I (c 1111) rw. von Grunenberg, Ata
2. von Lunkhofen, Rudolfus (c 1132) m. von Lutten De Lunchunft, Margaretha
3. von Lunkhofen, Johannes (c 1161) m. von Mottingen, Anna
4. von Lunkhofen, Henricus (c 1192) m. von Hottingen, Anna
5. von Lunkhofen, Rudolfus (c 1219) m. Snewli, Margareta
6. von Lunkhofen, Henricus (c 1248) m. Snewli, Judenta
7. von Lunkhofen, Johannes II (c 1277) m. Snewli, Agnes
8. Snewli, Ulrich (c 1320) m. Muench, Katherina
9. Snewli, Ulrich II (1351) m. Unknown
10. Snewli, Steffan (c 1378) m. Elsi, Elisabeth
11. Schnely, Johannes III (c 1420) m. Unknown
12. Schnely, Johannes IV (c 1445) m. Hedinger, Verena
13. Schnely, Thomann (c 1485) m. Unknown
14. Schnebli, Hans (?) m. Unknown
15. Schnebli, Jacob (?) m. Huber, Elsbeth
16. Schnebli, Elsbeth (1593) m. Weber, George
17. Weber, Heinrich Schnebli (1620) m. Ruggin, Elsbeth Ruegg
18. Weber, Johann Anton (1658) m. Herr, Maria Margaretha
19. Weber, George H. (1693) m. Good, Barbara (Guth)
20. Weber, Hans G. (1728) m. Siegrist, Feronica
21. Weber, Barbara (1764) S. m. Zimmerman, Christian M.
22. Zimmerman, Christian W. (1793) m. Martin, Maria Z.
23. Zimmerman, Christian F. IV (1834) m. Martin, Mary W.
24. Zimmerman, Martin M. (1866) m. Martin, Magdalena N.
25. Zimmerman, Anna Martin (1894) m. Ressler, Daniel Grube
26. Ressler, Elvin Jay (1940) m. Pawling, Jeanne Sandra
27. Ressler, Michael Elvin (1964)

But What About the Ressler Line?

Marty started his Ressler family tree with Isaac Franklin Ressler, Sr., birth unknown, death unknown, interred unknown. The only thing Marty did know was that he married Martha Sechrist on Sept. 30, 1866. Unfortunately, that is all I know with any confidence today. This situation is actually a really good warning about the pitfalls of online genealogy, and how there are bad family trees all over the place, so unless you have original documentation, you really can't trust it.

This is long, but it is my official statement of the situation as recorded on my website:

There is a lot of confused information out on the web that mixes up this Isaac Franklin Ressler with an Isaac S. Ressler who was born in Lancaster Co., PA approximately 1847, but died in Bluffton, IN in 1905. To be fair, I don't know from my own family

sources when or where Isaac Franklin was born or died though 1847 seems reasonable, and they were apparently both blacksmiths, although the Mart Zimmerman “O’er Stormy Seas” book strongly implies that Isaac Franklin (Sr.) was a blacksmith in Manheim Twp. PA, around the time Isaac Franklin Jr. was married in 1898. I had assumed that Isaac Franklin Ressler was the son of Isaac Ressler (hereafter “Isaac 1805”) and Mary Schlott, but I’m realizing that I cannot prove that definitively, given the confusion. Isaac 1805 and Mary definitely did have a son named Isaac, but which of the many Isaacs noted here is not clear. Therefore, I have broken the chain between Isaac Franklin and Isaac 1805/Mary until I have further evidence.

What I know about Isaac Franklin Ressler, Sr. without ambiguity, either from the genealogy my uncle Martin Ressler researched (available at Bluffton University <https://cat.opal-libraries.org/search~S4/o144528658> as well as my private copy I obtained from my father), conversations with older relatives that knew some of the children, my own visits to various gravesites, and a family Bible that I have in my possession:

Isaac Franklin Ressler (born unknown, died unknown, interred unknown) married Martha M. Sechrist (born 1843-02-01, died 1905-02-26, interred Trinity Lutheran Cemetery, New Holland, PA) on 1866-09-30. They had three children: Sara Jane (Sallie, 1870-06-01 to 1963-09-29), Isaac Franklin S. (1879-09-28 to 1943-07-07), and Charles Frances (1881-03-27 to 1951-04-17).

Martha is buried at Trinity Lutheran next to her sister Mary, Mary’s husband (Henry Weiler), and her parents. There is no evidence from exploring the cemetery that Isaac Franklin (Sr.) is also buried there, though their son (Isaac Franklin Ressler, Jr., aka Frank Ressler) is buried there.

From Isaac Jr.’s death certificate, it is stated that both parents (Isaac Franklin and Martha) were born in Ironville, near the western edge of Lancaster Co. They must have moved northeast to Sporting Hill (near Manheim) where Isaac Jr. was born in 1879.

Further null evidence is that he was not known by his descendants (my ancestors) to have left Lancaster County, nor was there any discussion of him having served in the military. My father and several of my uncles were Civil War enthusiasts, and while several other of my/their ancestors were known to have served in the Civil War, there was never any mention of Isaac Franklin having done so (or served in the military shortly after the war).

Concerning Isaac S. Ressler, ignoring any family tree information from ancestry.com, which I find to be notoriously unreliable:

<http://genealogytrails.com/ind/wells/deaths-5.html> says of Isaac S:

“Isaac S. Ressler, 16 Feb 1905, Bluffton, 58 Years, Male, White”, which would have put his birth year at 1847.

A newspaper death notice at https://img.newspapers.com/img/img?institutionId=0&user=0&id=29170222&width=557&height=567&crop=1807_4036_574_596&rotation=

0&brightness=0&contrast=0&invert=0&ts=1589161866&h=90bae93804e93e5fe467594acfa32dae
reads:

“Isaac Ressler, a blacksmith at Bluffton, died Thursday shortly after he had eaten a hearty dinner. Earlier in the day Ressler had swallowed a heavy dose of laudanum with suicidal intent, but he was believed to be safely recovering when he suddenly reeled and fell, and death ensued a few moments later. Ressler had been drinking for several days, and is believed to have taken the poison an account of a quarrel with his wife which ensued when she remonstrated with him for his bibulous habits. He was an old soldier, 58 years of age.”

This is consistent with a Civil War pension registration card that describes an Isaac S. Ressler, of Pennsylvania who served in the US Army infantry, Regiment 53, Company I, after the War (“Conflict Period: Other Service”. The pension request was filed 1890-10-13, and notes that he died in Bluffton, IN, on Feb. 16, 1905.

A possibly identical Isaac S. Ressler applied to marry Barbara E. Wyatt on October 6, 1887. While the license was applied for on this date, there is a comment that “no marriage return [was] made”. This was in Whitley Co., IN, one county (and a bit) over from Wells Co, IN, where the above Isaac S Ressler died in 1905. <http://whitleycountyin.org/marriages1/brides/bw.htm>

Another Isaac S. Ressler, this one of Ephrata Twp., PA, rented property from Samuel Heinicke, also of Ephrata Twp., on February 24, 1891. <https://www.cocalicovalleys.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/Card-Files-HARV-to-HEP-search-edited.pdf>

It is unlikely that these two Isaacs are the same person given that the marriage license was in 1887 in Indiana, while the rental was in Pennsylvania in 1891.

A third (or fourth) Isaac S Ressler that we can definitely rule out was a union painter and married Margarette Wilson in 1902. <http://genealogytrails.com/del/newcastle/w-post1850marriages.html>

He defrauded a widow in Savannah, GA and deserted his wife Margaret in Wilmington, DE in 1904/05 https://books.google.com/books?id=39mfAAAAMAAJ&pg=PA174&lpg=PA174&dq=%22isaac+s+ressler%22+marriage&source=bl&ots=-frYFe1YMx&sig=ACfU3U3EXKR6V7-pP_lbBAe-szydSlQQqg&hl=en&sa=X&ved=2ahUKEwiGtfzP0KrpAhXJ7Z4KHc1Av=onepage&q=%22isaac%20s%20ressler%22%20marriage&f=false

and was later divorced from Margaret in 1909. <https://www.newspapers.com/newspage/154704607>

Clearly not a possibility for our already confused situation.

Comments on what I have seen at ancestry.com

The information at <https://www.ancestry.com/genealogy/records/isaac-s-ressler-24-1y1v1b> states:

“Born in Lancaster, Pennsylvania on Jan 1847 to Isaac Ressler and Mary Polly Schlott. Isaac S Ressler married Magdalena ‘Martha’ Sechrist and had 5 children. He passed away on 16 Feb 1905 in Bluffton, Indiana.”

However, the children listed there are something of a hodge-podge with respect to the children listed in my uncle Martin’s family history that specifically details the descendants of this Isaac Franklin. They had 3 children: Sara Jane (Sallie), Isaac Franklin Jr., and Charles. Ancestry shows Sara Jane and Isaac Franklin Ressler (Jr.) with the correct dates, but they omit Charles, and they list three other “Resler” children. These three each has a name suspiciously like Isaac Franklin Sr.’s siblings, but are misspelled (Addisen vs Addison, Anne E vs Anna Elizabeth, and Caroline). Ancestry does list a second wife, Minerva “Minnie” Frank (1857-1929) who was the wife of the Isaac S. in Indiana and was born in Missouri or Illinois.

Perhaps I am putting too much faith in a middle initial, but my ancestor has always been Isaac Franklin; the family history assembled by my late uncle Martin Ressler starts with Isaac Franklin Ressler, and his research abilities were superb. The “other” Isaac has always been “S” (perhaps Strasburg, as noted by findagrave). The Civil War record is also clearly Isaac S (from a scan of the card). Unless I can find new information, I have to conclude that these are two (or more) different men, and that the linkage from Isaac Ressler and Mary Schlott to Isaac S given by ancestry.com is deeply suspect. However, I cannot prove that Isaac Franklin is the son of Isaac and Mary either. All I know is that the 1860 census shows that Isaac and Mary have a son Isaac who was 13 years old at the time. Whether this is my Isaac Franklin or some other Isaac S., I cannot yet say.

And there you have it.

Mike Ressler
June 24, 2023