



*Know Your Kindred Better*

# Society of Stukely Westcott Descendants of America

## THE WESTCOTT FAMILY QUARTERLY

JULY, 2011

### Greetings to all of the Westcott Clan!

Well, dear cousins my Canadian Odyssey was called off at the last minute. As it turned out my Kiwi friend had some health issues and her doctors advised against it. So, I have no tall tales about fighting off polar bears with my bare hands or any such. *–Lyle Westcott*

#### Welcome to Our New Members

On behalf of all of the cousins I would like to extend a hearty welcome to the following new members of The Society of Stukely Westcott Descendants of America:

Deborah Ann Krall - Hamilton Square, NJ  
Michael Lee Surgeon - St. Charles, MO

#### Stukely Westcott Memorial Day Wreath

Ex-President David advises us that he and Jeanne took the wreath and a flag to the Stukely Westcott Memorial Plaque in Warwick, RI. He reports that there was no trash or dead leaves at the base of the stone. Someone is keeping the grass well mowed

#### The Ensign Celebrates

Newly minted Ensign Sarah Kai Scheaffer after she received her degree in marine science and commission at the US Coast Guard Academy graduation in New London, Connecticut, Wednesday, May 18, 2011

Pam Scheaffer, who was in charge of the society reunion in Philadelphia a few years ago and who never misses a chance to brag about her daughter Sarah, shares the above photo of Sarah receiving a hug from President Obama.

*AP Photo by Charles Dharapak (with permission)*

The story goes that Sarah Kai Scheaffer, who majored in marine Science at the Coast Guard Academy, thought it would be really cool to hug the president so she asked for a hug and got it.



## OLIVER SPINK WESTCOTT

1834 – 1919

*Son of Capt. John Westcott and Lydia Tennant*

Oliver was born in Wickford, Rhode Island. He attended school and later Brown University in Providence. Soon after, he moved to the Chicago area and began teaching school. By 1881 he was teaching at Waller High School in Chicago and by 1883 he was named principal there, a position he held until his retirement in 1915 at the age of 80.

In the article in the Wickford paper, G.T. Cranston writes that Oliver Westcott was known as a brilliant man. He was fluent in French, Spanish, Italian, German and Greek. He also taught Latin, English, science and math during his career. He was known to have one of the largest personal libraries in the Chicago area and was also an avid entomologist and had a personal collection of 45,000 insect specimens rivaling that of the best universities of the day.

When Oliver Spink Westcott passed away in 1919, just shy of his 85th birthday he was one of Wickford's most prominent sons and one of Chicago's favorite citizens.

Soon after his death, the Chicago School System named one of its junior high schools O.S. Westcott Junior High School to honor his memory. When Chicago did away with the junior high school program they transferred the name to an elementary school in the city.

Oliver's aunt, Avis Ann Spink of Wickford left Oliver a portrait of the man he was named after, her late husband, Capt. Oliver Spink of Wickford, in her will.

Now, my question to all of you Westcott cousins, is this: Does anyone know where the portrait of Capt. Oliver Spink is today? It is very likely someplace in the Chicago area. Contact Betty W. Acker, betw@prodigy.net, Society Historian or call (740) 454-1876.



House where Oliver grew up in Wickford, Rhode Island



Oliver Spink Westcott 1834 - 1919

## Westcott Stoneware Bottles

According to Graci's American Stoneware Bottles, these one-quart bottles were made in Warwick, RI from 1872 to 1881 by Charles A. Westcott. The impressed letters are blue filled.



The center bottle is early with no date and the name is spelled Wescott. The one on the right has a date of 1872 and the one on the left is 1874 and has a better finish on the bottle

## Westcott's Improved Dash Churn

There seems to be no end of products and inventions by our forebears. Below is a description of an improved dash churn. H.P. Westcott and Co. of Seneca, NY is the inventor and manufacturer of this remarkable device. A description of this churn is as follows:

As many dairymen will not use just any churn, but one that operates on the dash principle, I herewith give a brief description and illustration of the best improvement of the dash churn that can be found in the country.

The illustration shown below furnishes a correct idea of the churn. The dash is operated by a horizontal lever. A stiff spring is secured to the short end of the lever for the purpose of lifting the dasher after it has been forced downward, thus relieving the operator of the fatigue caused by lifting the dasher. Everyone who is accustomed to using a dashed churn understands that lifting the dasher constitutes the most laborious part of churning with a churn of this kind. It is true that more force is required to push the dasher downward as the spring operates as a hindrance when the lever is descending. But, it must be borne in mind that a person can press a lever downwards against a strong resistance with much less fatigue than he can lift a weight equal to the strength of a spring that will hold or lift a given weight or pressure.

At the right hand of the illustration the dasher is represented having an adjustable flange dasher which may be moved up and down on the standard and in the center hole by means of a screw, the thread of which is cut in the standard in the center hole of the adjustable dasher. Many dairymen who thought there could not be an improvement in the old dash churn, have accepted this churn as superior to any other.



## The Westcott Ruler

In 1992, Philip R. Westcott was plant manager of the plant in Seneca Falls, NY which was making Westcott Rulers. He gives the following history: The business was founded by my grandfather, Charles Henry Westcott and his brother Frank. They were assisted in the design and building of equipment by their father, Henry Palmer Westcott, who designed patented and marketed a new churn in 1846. Said churn is described above.

They began making embossed wooden children's blocks of various sizes and also embossed moldings. The moldings were made from cherry, basswood, etc. and were approximately six inches wide by several feet long. These were embossed with various designs. There are only a few segments remaining.

At this time printers' furniture was also being made. These are fairly narrow flat pieces of wood of varying lengths that were used by printers when setting type – for spacing when locking up the type in the chase. At this point they came up with the idea that if they could make printers' furniture, they could also use print scales on them and have rulers and yardsticks. This was the beginning of the ruler business, and it evolved into the Westcott Ruler Company. Prior to that it had been the Westcott Bros. Company.

The business expanded into all types of rulers and yardsticks and all types of measuring devices made from boxwood, maple and basswood initially, and other types of lumber as years went by.

During this period logs were imported (boxwood) and sawn into lumber, were kiln dried, cut into lengths on a cut-off saw. ripped into the proper thickness on a gang saw, were trimmed to the exact length on a trim saw, and were then put through a sticker or molder and shaper. After that they were printed, varnished and a metal edge was inserted. In some cases metal ends were also added. Later the processing of logs by the company was given up and they purchased green lumber from local mills. All other operations remained the same.

During the depression in the 30's the company, to augment the reduced sales of rulers and yardsticks began to manufacture and market venetian blinds. The slats were, of course, made of wood which was easily turned out on their equipment. These blinds were very popular and sales managed to fill the gap until the early 40's when ruler sales increased to the point where the blinds were gradually phased out. The company was then again solely in the ruler, yardstick and meterstick business.

In 1966 the business was sold to the Acme United Corp. of Bridgeport, Connecticut. Production remained in Seneca Falls until 1995 when the manufacturing was moved to Fremont, NC. Acme United manufactures shears, scissors, letter openers, etc. so that the rulers made an ideal additive to their line. All of Acme's and Westcott's manufacturing is now concentrated in one facility in Fremont. Even though it is no longer in Seneca Falls where it was founded, Westcott is still the leader in the wooden ruler business. An early Westcott Rule Co., Inc. brochure says that the company also manufactured Arrow Brand, Strateline and Simplex rulers.

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*The family has a direct line of descendancy back to Stukely Westcott: Philip R. Jr. (10), Philip R. Sr. (9), Charles Henry (8), Henry Palmer (7), Gorton (6), Reuben (5), Amos (4), William (3), Jeremiah (2), Stuckely (1)*

## Death Notice for Charles Westcott of Westcott Ruler Fame

February 25, 1938

# Death Takes C. H. Westcott, Seneca Falls Manufacturer

### One-Man Business He Began Grew To Big Firm

Seneca Falls—Charles H. Westcott, 90, died yesterday in his home, 11 Green St., after a few days' illness of heart disease. Westcott, dean of Seneca Falls manufacturers and president of the Westcott Rule Company Inc., was active in the business of that company until Saturday, for more than 66 years, being connected with the business from the time of its institution.

He was born Aug. 30, 1848, in this village, the son of Henry P. and Amy Mariette Sloan Westcott. When he was 3 years of age, his parents moved to 11 Green St., where he since has lived. He attended Seneca Falls schools and completed a course of study in Homer Academy in Homer.

Westcott founded the Westcott Rule business at the age of 24 and was its sole operator. He used a building on his father's property midway between Green and East Bayard Sts. That building is now a part of the Westcott Rule Company Inc., and is used as a shop and composing department. Aided by his father who designed several machines, Westcott and his brother, Frank Westcott, started to manufacturing wooden furniture for printers and plant trellis units. The firm name Westcott Brothers was used, Charles H. Westcott operated the factory and Frank Westcott was the salesman.

Eight years after the business was started, Westcott began the manufacture of rulers and yardsticks. In 1890 the business was incorporated as Westcott Brothers Inc. In 1894 the corporate title became the Westcott-Jewell Company, with the late C. E. Jewell as an associate. Rulers and yardsticks soon became the predominating product and the business gained a worldwide reputation.

Jewell retired in 1916 and the business title became the Westcott Rule Company Inc. Since 1916 Westcott was president of the company and active daily in the office of the concern.



CHARLES H. WESTCOTT

Westcott was married June 9, 1885 in Canandaigua to Miss Ada S. Palmer of that city. Mrs. Westcott died July 12, 1936. He was a member of Trinity Episcopal Church and was one of the founders of the Citizens' Club, now extinct. He was a renowned fisherman and built the first cabin along the Cayuga Lake Rd. near Bridgeport. Surviving are his daughter, Miss Alice R. Westcott of this village, a son, Philip R. Westcott, a grandson, Philip R. Westcott Jr. of Seneca Falls, and a niece, Mrs. Henry N. Greis of Tulsa, O. A.

From the desk of your Society  
Historian, Betty W. Acker, 1999

## **Joanne Leitner Writes about her great grandfather John Kimberly Mumford**

### **‘FADOO’, A MAN WITH A PLAN**

Special to the SSWDA Quarterly

by Joanne Leitner (Part 2 of 3)

July, 2011

#### The Continuing Story ~

To do research for his masterpiece, the volume “Oriental Rugs” published by Scribner’s and Sons in 1900, John Kimberly Mumford is said to have quit his job to travel through Turkey and Iran, in those days by camel and donkey. A timeless jewel of non-fiction literature, “Oriental Rugs” has seen many a reprinting and is still considered one of the most authoritative works on rugs that has ever been written.

On December 15th 1900 it was noted in the New York Times that the first edition of “Oriental Rugs” had sold out. The difficulty of reproducing the full-color plates prevented it from being reprinted fast enough to meet the demand. Thanks to these plates the book was one of the first “coffee table books” ever published.

The editors at the Times decided to pay attention to this ‘amateur’ and followed up with a review of the book on January 26th in The N. Y. Times Saturday Review. On February 9th 1901, in what appeared to have been a letter to the editor, R.P.R. of N.Y. claimed it to have been one of the best books published in the United States during the entire year of 1900.

On November 28th 1902 the Times mentioned Mumford's collaboration with regard to a catalog for the Marquand collection to be sold in New York in the later part of January 1903. An announcement regarding the sale of Mumford's personal collection of over 500 oriental rugs at the Fifth Avenue Art Galleries at 366 Fifth Avenue may be found in The New York Times on April 21st 1906. Where they all came from, when and how they arrived in the U.S. and how much he earned is unknown. He had a showroom on the second floor of a building, possibly at 44th Street and 5th Avenue. On March 3rd 1916 he is again noted as having had begun to sell his collection at the Anderson Galleries in New York. The Metropolitan Art Museum is listed as one of the buyers.

Over the years Mr. Mumford penned many articles spanning a variety of subjects. An illustrated article "Along a Persian Highway" appeared in the January 5th 1901 issue of Harper's Weekly on pages 10 and 11. In May 1902 "Glimpses of Modern Persia (Part 1, The Garden)" may be found in House and Gardens. Other articles in Harper's included "Alger's Spanish American War", "The Rehabilitation of New York Election Night in New York" and "Men of To-day – Thomas F. Ryan". In 1908 the series "This Land of Opportunity" regularly appeared in Harper's Weekly and included essays such as "Gary, The City that Rose from a Sandy Waste". "The Heart of a 'Soulless Corporation'", "The Man and the Job", "The Nerve Center of Business" and "The Railroads and the Great West". On December 25th 1909 the Times noted he had prepared "The Passing of the Antique Rug" for the January 1910 issue of Century Magazine.

During WWI John K. Mumford assisted in editing the Red Cross Magazine in Washington. He was also the director of publicity for the Red Cross during that time. By November 10th 1922 the Times had also made room for his contemplations, some of which were reflected in the article, "Last Haven of Exclusives." On the "Special Feature Page of Worth While Stories" of the The Coshocton Tribune he made some contribution or another, possibly "Art and Other Things" on April 29th 1923. At one point he was night editor of the N.Y. Sun. "Has Our Great Country Gone Installment Mad?" was printed on page 3 of the New York Herald Books Magazine on February 3rd 1924.

From 1914 to 1918 John Kimberly had been commissioned to write about Bethlehem Steel. The company did not publish what he'd submitted until 1943. A good 50 pages had come together, however, the tenth and eleventh chapters were missing. This unfinished work is considered to be an extremely accurate portrayal of the the company and the times. In a letter from Mumford in Catskill, N.Y. to Eugene Grace (company president) in N.Y.C. on November 8th 1920, Mumford expressed disappointment at not having been summoned to discuss the outcome of the endeavor. He inquired if his findings had caused certain affiliates to have second thoughts and added that the final chapters were ready.

Between 1919 and 1926 there are several references to the family in The Catskill N. Y. Recorder. Mumford had obtained a farm on Lime Street which no longer exists today. Although fondly remembered by his younger children, the elder siblings felt their father had secured it merely to provide a safeguard for the family, so that he might pursue his own interests.





John Kimberly with Harriet and Marcia

*Photo courtesy of M. Park. Many thanks to M. K. Leitner, J. K. M. Dutton and B. & G. Small for providing valuable information. No part of the contents including photography may be copied, reproduced or published without the expressed written permission of the author.*

Mumford wrote impressive introductions and segments for art catalogs including a publication about the estate collection of Charles Tyson Yerkes (1837- 1905), an American businessman, philanthropist and art collector. Rugs, tapestries, sculpture, furniture and other objects are portrayed and commented upon by Mumford. He'd also written a portrayal of the financial wizard, George H. Earle, Jr., then aged 55, for the monthly magazine, Munsey's. Other volumes by John Kimberly Mumford include "Out-spinning the Spider; the Story of Wire and Wire Rope" in 1921; "The Story of Bakelite" (Robert L. Stillson Company) in 1924 and in 1925 "Anthracite" in the Romance of Industry Series. Several of these publications are available at second hand book dealers.

On assignment for Hearst this tireless individual made his way to Singapore Straits Settlements (former British East India) to begin research on the subject of rubber. What became of his efforts are not known, for he contracted pneumonia after having had something to drink and retiring to his bed along the way. He died either on the ship or after arrival in Singapore on April 17th 1926 and was buried in the old English cemetery in Singapore Straits Settlement. Asked at a later date if his remains shouldn't be brought back to Nyack, his oldest daughter replied, "leave him there!" Harriet also reported that he 'returned' through 'automatic handwriting'. No surprise! According to her daughter-in-law, when Harriet bid him to stop tormenting her, he did.

Lucy (Park) Clarke, Fashion Editor of Harper's Bazaar, later visited Singapore on assignment and visited the grave of her sister-in-law's father. The family still has a copy of a photograph she had taken in which the misspelling of his middle name on the monument (Kimberley instead of Kimberly) is evident. After WWII his grandson, Chip Park, revisited the place only to find that most of the gravestones had disappeared, including that of our ancestor.

-to be continued-

## **A Word from Our President**

Susan Morris is planning our next Reunion for June 29, 2012 in Buffalo, New York. It sounds like it will be a great adventure. Although I was born and raised near Syracuse, NY, I have never visited Buffalo. I am really looking forward to seeing my “cousins” again and seeing all the sights. So, for those who plan ahead, hold that weekend open and join us for a really good time.

*Ailene Picheco, Merritt Island, FL*

## **A Word from Your Editor**

Please send any news or articles re the Westcott Family which you may wish to have considered for inclusion in the Quarterly to your editor at:

Lyle\_Wescott@yahoo.com

or

Lyle Wescott  
180 Pleasant Valley Dr.  
Holly Springs, MS 38635

While there are no firm deadlines, I shall try to publish the Quarterly in January, April, July and October of each year.

## ***The Westcott Family Quarterly***

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## **Society of Stukely Westcott Descendants of America**

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