

Winesburg & Meisenhelder Families of Boggs Run

By Eileen Long Goddard

Meisenhelder & Winesburg genealogy files:

<http://www.wvgw.net/marshall/gen-pmeisenhelder.pdf>

<http://www.wvgw.net/marshall/gen-jacobwinesburg.pdf>

My great-grandparents, Samuel Winesburg, 23, and Sarah Margaret Meisenhelder, 21, were married in Marshall County, West Virginia on July 20, 1875. Samuel was born in Ohio County and had been residing in Tyler County. Sarah Margaret was born in Marshall County and also resided there. Her parents were Christian Meisenhelder and Mary Ann Jones, who were married in Marshall County on April 19, 1841 [Marriage was probably in 1840 instead of 1841 because marriages were listed in order of time performed. The listing before and after is 1840. Census of 1840 shows this couple as a family.].

Samuel and Sarah Margaret "Maggie" Winesburg had the following children:

- (1) Belle Lamar Winesburg, b Jan 16, 1876, Marshall County, W.Va.; d Apr 26 1949, Marshall County, W.Va.
- (2) Ethel Winesburg, b May 1883, d Mar 16, 1885
- (3) Ira Winesburg, b Mar 14, 1885, Ohio County, W.Va.; d unknown
- (4) Earl Winesburg [**PHOTO**], b 1886; d Mar 27, 1913, Norfolk, Va.; buried Mt. Olivet, Marshall County
- (5) Erick Winesburg, b Dec 16, 1889, Marshall County, W.Va.; d Jan 14, 1891, Marshall County, W.Va.
- (6) Iola/Iona Winesburg, b Jan 4, 1892, Marshall County, W.Va.; d unknown

My great-grandfather, Samuel Winesburg, was murdered on Boggs Run on July 24, 1892.

John Moylan was found guilty of the murder Samuel Winesburg. On Feb 27, 1893, the court sentenced him as follows: *...the said John Moylan to be imprisoned in the Public Jail and Penitentiary House of the state for the term of Ten years and that he be kept at hard labor....*

Michael Moylan, father of John Moylan, received this sentence for his part in the crime: *Michael Moylan is to be imprisoned in the jail of this county for the period of 30 days and pay a fine of twenty five dollars for said assault and battery and the costs of this cause by the state of W.Va.*

My great-grandmother, Sarah Margaret "Maggie" (Meisenhelder) Winesburg, was shot at the same time as her husband. She was not expected to survive but she lived until 1925. "Moundsville Daily Echo," Friday, December 11, 1925: *MRS. MAGGIE WINESBURG DIED HERE EARLY TODAY - Mrs. Maggie Winesburg died this morning at the home of her daughter, Mrs. Long on Arlington Avenue, after a long illness of paralysis. - Mrs. Winesburg was 69 years of age and is survived by her daughter Mrs. Long. Arrangements for the funeral are not complete but interment will be made at Mt. Olivet.*

One of the family stories of interest about the shooting is that Maggie's daughter, my grandmother, Belle Lamar Winesburg, was at Mt. Olivet church for a meeting. My grandfather, James Francis Long, was also at the meeting. When the news of the shooting came to Belle, Grandad went with her, and while Grandma held the lantern for the doctor to perform the surgery on Sarah Margaret, Grandad held Grandma's hand. Soon after they started dating and got married in 1893.

A HORRIBLE TRAGEDY.

Sergeant Winesburg Murdered, and His Wife Seriously Wounded.

THE MURDERERS OUGHT ARREST.

They are Michael and John Moylan, Father and Son—The Tragedy Occurred About Two Miles Up Boggs Run, in Marshall County, About Nine O'Clock Last Night.

A terrible tragedy was enacted in the valley of Boggs run about two miles from the lower end of this city, about nine o'clock last night.

Michael Winesburg, a well-known workman in the Wheeling steel plant at Duwont, was murdered, and his wife seriously and probably fatally wounded.

Their assassins were Michael and John Moylan, father and son, the former was a workman in the Wheeling plant.

Just three men were arrested a short time after this bloody affair, and were safely confined in the Duwont lock-up. Ward was sent to this city, about ten o'clock, shortly after the tragedy by train leaves in Duwont, and the city policemen duty in this lower ward did all that was possible to assist in capturing the accused persons.

NEWS REACHES DUWONT.

The first news of the tragedy reached Duwont about one o'clock, when Tom Jones and Fred Katta, neighbors of the parties, came to town in a taxi band to report of a shooting. They stopped first at the City Building, and notified Marshal John Gorman, and calling there they ascertained that they had spoken Dr. McDaniel. The physician accompanied them back in the scene of the crime. The story spread like wildfire, and in a few minutes a large crowd of men had gathered around the police station, anxious to hear the news, while wild rumors were circulated. Marshal Gorman, accompanied by officer Wm. Quay, and Constable Ignouss passed a basket, and started after the murderer. An old story has been told as a local connecting the run with that part of the hillside near the Riverside plant. The effort started through the tunnel with the latter.

In the meantime Will Meyer, the well-known druggist, accompanied by a former friend near his place, drove in to town, and from there the messenger learned the story as it was told by the wife and sister-in-law of the murdered man.

ON THE SCENE OF THE MURDER.

It was supposed from their story that the tragedy, which is supposed to have taken place at the Winesburg steel plant, had occurred during the evening, and part of the afternoon of Monday. He went to his home late in the afternoon, and went to sleep. He awoke before eight o'clock in the morning and was informed that Moylan had visited his wife. He became very angry, and re-communicated with the father doing so.

A sister-in-law separates the house of Moylan and Winesburg. The house of the former is on the north side, and the latter on the south side of the river. When Winesburg told Moylan to take his father-in-law with him, the latter dared him to come down to the road. According to Mrs. Winesburg's story, her husband went down to the road, and Moylan at once struck at him. While they were quarreling Mrs. Winesburg came down to greet them from coming to town, when John Moylan produced a revolver and shot three times. The first shot passed through Winesburg's breast and the second entered the left breast of his wife, about two inches above the heart. The third shot missed the mark.

A WITNESS TALKS.

Winesburg as soon fell to the road, and when suddenly attacked by the bullet which, struck in the stomach, he was dead. Among the first to arrive on the scene were the two men who came to Duwont for a physician. They carried the dead body into Winesburg's home, and laid it upon the door of the front room.

Mrs. Winesburg ran to the house of Will Meyer, about a half-mile away, and he was upon the scene in a few minutes. After doing the shooting, the Moylans, father and son, entered their home and the men went to bed. A crowd of half a hundred curious people soon gathered on the scene of the tragedy. The physician arrived in a short time, but Winesburg was beyond medical aid. The bullet in Mrs. Winesburg, scored above the heart, and lodged just beneath the ribs below her shoulder in her back. The physician extracted the bullet, and did all that was possible to alleviate her suffering. The wound is a very dangerous one, and will very probably prove fatal.

THE ARREST.

About eleven o'clock the officers arrived through the tunnel. Moylan's home was dark, not a light being visible. The officers knocked at the front door. Moylan, who had probably remained up in anticipation of arrest, came down and opened the door. The officers placed him under arrest, and asked for the son. The father called John down from the second story, and he was also placed under arrest. The officers proceeded up stairs, on which by the prisoners, and found the weapon with which the murders were committed in a box in a trunk. The weapon is a three-barrel revolver of every cheap pattern. After firing the shots Moylan could reload the revolver and when it was found all the chambers were full. Moylan took his arrest very coolly and did not offer any resistance. He said he intended coming to town in the morning to surrender. The son, a stout lad, only in years of age, did not wince without protest, but after his head and neck were cut a word.

MURDER IS TALK.

Both prisoners walked the entire distance with the law officers, while Constable Gorman remained at the home of Winesburg, to aid the physician. The

party reached town about one o'clock. The report about the City Building, mentioning that a husband, came, and proceeded forward without a hat a look at the prisoner, and even turned their way into the cell corridor, until the officers reached them. The father and son were carefully searched, and then placed in solitary cells.

A Houshka reporter was present when the prisoners were brought in, and heard the story of the crime from their own lips. The father was seen in blood, and stated that the murder was done in self-defense. He said he was in town with his wagon, and several of his children in the afternoon, which was corroborated by the officers, and a half dozen men present, who had seen him. He said he was returning to his home when he was met by Winesburg and his wife in the road and Winesburg tried to plot a quarrel, and a few words were exchanged. He and his wife then started to street, and Moylan and son John started to run toward the house. They passed three times with their wagon, and once struck John through the left eye and almost knocked him down. It was then, believing that they intended to kill him, that he pulled his revolver and fired at random. Mr. and Mrs. Winesburg, he said, were on his property at the time. He stated that the boy had the revolver or fired the shot.

THE SON'S STORY.

The boy was placed in the cell, beneath his head, and proceeded to take off his shoes. When the reporter spoke to him, he came forward, and by open fire, with tears. The story he told corresponded that of the father. He showed a scar on the side of his face, which he said was the result of being struck by the stone. He said his father and the murderer were both quarreling, respectively, and that Winesburg was always "picking on them." The father also stated that Winesburg was very quarrelsome.

Justice Henry Biddle went into the scene of the tragedy early this morning, and will hold an inquest sometime today. Moylan was taken from about a year ago, on complaint of Winesburg, and was found, shortly after the prisoner Moylan which are of a very demanding nature. It is well that he has always carried a revolver, and that he has frequently saved him from the law by racing them with the weapon in his hand.

THE PARTIES TO THE CRIME.

All the parties are well known in Duwont. Winesburg, the victim of the awful tragedy, has been employed for a long time at the lower steel plant. His wife's maiden name was McDaniel. He leaves three children. He has always enjoyed a reputation as a powerful law-abiding citizen.

Michael Moylan, the self-confessed murderer, was employed at the Winesburg steel plant until about a month ago, where which time he has been fired. He met with an accident about eight or nine months ago, when a tank was broken, and the loss of work left him in very poor circumstances. He has a farm of twenty acres surrounding his home. His wife has been dead about six years, leaving a chance of five children, upon him. The oldest of these, who is with him, shared with last night's murder, is a like and about 16. He has been employed for some time by Mr. Martin, the Duwont tinner. Michael Moylan was generally regarded as a good, law-abiding citizen.

In this matter it is worth gathered about the jail last night, that evidence was given to the story of Moylan, the general opinion being that the son was the real murderer.

My great-grandparents, Samuel Winesburg, 23, and Sarah Margaret Meisenhelder, 21, were married in Marshall County, West Virginia on July 20, 1875. Samuel was born in Ohio County and had been residing in Tyler County. Sarah Margaret was born in Marshall County and also resided there. Her parents were Christian Meisenhelder and Mary Ann Jones, who were married in Marshall County on April 19, 1841 [Marriage was probably in 1840 instead of 1841 because marriages were listed in order of time performed. The listing before and after is 1840. Census of 1840 shows this couple as a family.].

Sarah Margaret was a published poet.

Charles Meisenhelder, a brother of Sarah Margaret, served during the Civil War in Company "P" 6th West Virginia Infantry. At the age of 21, he mustered in 8 Aug 1862. Charles is buried at Mt. Olivet Cemetery, Marshall County.