



Society of Stukely Westcott Descendents of America

Know your kindred better



New Westcott Society Members

New Westcott cousins to our society rolls come from six different states. Welcome from Connecticut, Mary Catherine Tucker; from California, Westcott Stone Bell IV; from New York, Timothy James Pieper; from Iowa, Sarah Marie Haag; from Washington Kenneth Marshall and from Michigan, Michael G. Andrews.



2023 Society lifetime members

For their 80th birthday celebration this year, these Westcott cousins received a lifetime membership from SSWDA. President Louise Atkinson sent along the membership with a family greeting to these cousins:

- ★ William Westcott of San Diego California
- ★ Mary E Westcott of Benson Arizona
- ★ Robert Westcott of Canby Oregon



Barlow Miles Westcott Scholarship 2023

Awarded to Liam Smith

The 2023 scholarship was awarded to Liam Smith, son of Westcott cousin Aric Smith of Rockford, Michigan. Liam attends the University of Wisconsin, Madison Campus. What follows is his application essay.

After learning about this scholarship from my grandfather who is active in genealogy research and a member of this society, I began reading posted articles about Stukely Westcott and his numerous descendants. The stories of accomplished relatives are interesting and inspiring, but I felt a connection to the son of Henry P. Westcott, Charles Henry Westcott. The characteristics of adaptability, versatility, strong leadership, and being bound by a sense of commitment and duty are prevalent in the life of Charles H. Westcott. They are also features that I strive toward.

Charles Henry Westcott was born into an entrepreneurial hard-working family in 1848 and lived until 1938. The first similarity that I immediately identified with was that he came from a high-performing family and that his uncle was a dentist. Both of my parents are dentists who own their own businesses, so I understand the responsibility and pride felt with business ownership. Being around hard-working family inspires me, just like Charles and his brother were inspired by their father's developments and businesses.

Without knowing it, Charles H. Westcott and his brother had a direct impact on me years before I knew of the ancestral connection. Their creation of the Westcott ruler and yardstick was instrumental in the planning and execution of my Eagle Scout project. My Eagle Project involved creating a director platform for a local archery center where our family was actively involved in shooting and volunteering. The construction plans and calculations for needed materials were made with the help of a Westcott ruler. Knowing the history behind the tools used to plan by project makes the product and process of earning the rank of Eagle Scout even more special! Additionally, Westcott rulers have helped me through my primary and secondary education and even now at the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

While creating a long-lasting product is terrific, I find admirable personal characteristics something to be more proud of and to strive toward. Charles H. Westcott showed adaptability when faced with adversity when his company encountered problems during the Great Depression. Ruler sales were down, so he adapted and started making Venetian blinds to stay relevant in the changing markets and to supplement for lost sales. In my own life, I have encountered adversity during construction of my Eagle Project, during my Paralympic swimming career, and during my educational path.

During construction of my Eagle project, welding for platform stability was needed.

While welding, a spark from the weld started a fire that required a quick response from me as the project manager that required additional support from the fire department. Even though this was a relatively severe setback that I had to explain while defending my project, I was able to raise the necessary money to cover the damage and to complete the project. Another example of facing adversity and adaptability was during my US Paralympic Swimming career during high school. I have a type of dwarfism called hypochondroplasia that affects the length of my arms and legs but not my attitude or outlook on life. I proudly swam for the USA at national and international meets including Peru. Yearly, until the age of 18, there is a process of reclassification where different parameters are measured including height for swimmers with dwarfism. Sadly, at classification I was four millimeters too tall, lost my international swimming classification, and do not currently qualify for the US Paralympic team. This adversity allowed me to explore the opportunity to participate on the University of Wisconsin Men's Rowing team where I am a coxswain; a job where my smaller size and past competition experience is beneficial. This rewarding experience would not have been possible without the adversity of losing my swimming classification. Lastly, my college educational choice has not taken a direct path. Coming to college as a planned computer science major but then quickly realizing that my personality and career desires were different and jarring. Being willing to adapt has allowed me to find a major and eventual career that I am excited about. Although each of my experiences are different from Charles Westcott's, they reflect the ability to adapt and keep moving forward. I will continue to strive to build a legacy from product or service using Charles H. Westcott as a role model.

Versatility and being well-rounded are other traits embodied by Charles H. Westcott that I work to emulate. He and his brother helped create and produce rulers, churns, moldings, and


toys. In the same way that Charles was able to expand into other products, I have also expanded into other areas of my life. Through service, I was an active member in Cub Scouts, Boy Scouts, and as an Eagle Scout. My service journey has continued in college by being a member of the alumni student board which hosts programs for the student body. Athletically, I progressed from a nationally ranked archer in elementary and middle school to an internationally ranked Paralympic swimmer on the United States National Team during high school. During my time in college, I have been able to represent Wisconsin as a member on the men's rowing team as a coxswain. These unique experiences have shaped my growth as a person while also focusing on education and the future. Charles H. Westcott is a role model as I continue to develop my skills and interests.

Additionally, Charles was a leader and I, too, look to lead others toward collective growth and improvement. The trait of leadership can be seen through the course of planning and the execution of my Eagle Project, being a captain on my high school and club swim teams, and in my daily role as a coxswain. Charles's strong leadership skills running his company can be seen through its longevity and perseverance.

Lastly, commitment and duty are traits that Charles Henry Westcott demonstrated that I am striving to embody. Charles was devoted to the Westcott Rule Company for more than 66 years and was actively involved with the business up until a few days before he passed away. I plan to devote my life to creating a legacy for generations through my hard work and dedication to career and service.

The characteristics of adaptability, versatility, strong leadership, and being bound by a sense of commitment and duty are prevalent in the life of Charles H. Westcott and ones that I strive to achieve. Charles Henry Westcott followed the Founder's example and has inspired me during my readings about his life. For these reasons, I am proud and honored to be a descendent of the Westcott Family and feel that I represent the family ideals. Thank you for your consideration of my scholarship application.



 **July 2024, mark your calendars (final dates TBD).**
Our next SSWDA reunion will be held in Charlotte, North Carolina.



From summers past:

Gardiner Westcott Takes the Family to the Beach



“The third annual reunion and picnic of Northern New York Chapter was held at Westcott Beach near Sackets Harbor, N.Y., on Monday, August 10, [1936] the home of Mr. and Mrs. George H. Westcott. Despite a heavy thunderstorm in the forenoon, sixty-eight were present. Through the generous hospitality of our host and hostess, their spacious farm home was thrown open for the luncheon. During luncheon, the storm ceased, the sun came out brightly, and all adjourned to the beach” (from a report by Mrs. Lulu Westcott Burgen in the September 1936 Westcott Family Quarterly).

In the first decades of the Westcott Society one of the most active groups was the Northern New York Chapter (Chapter 4), which held reunions almost every year starting in 1934, most of them at a beach grove on the eastern shore of Lake Ontario owned by George and Mitilda Westcott. Today, most of the original 190-acre Westcott property is Westcott Beach State Park.



In 1946, the Westcott family sold 170 acres of their farm south of Sackets Harbor to the State of New York. Westcott Beach State Park, opened in 1950, includes a 3,000-foot beach, picnic groves and playing fields

(lower left), and 164 campsites. A jetty (upper right) reaching out into Henderson Bay divides the beach front into a bathing area and a boat launch. The original Westcott homestead (lower right), a 12-room house overlooking the grove and beach, now serves as park headquarters.

Heading to the North Country

So, how did our Westcott kin end up populating northern New York and owning a 3,000 foot beach just right for family gatherings? The short answer comes in a report in the September 1934 Westcott Family Quarterly about their second annual reunion titled "Up North Westcotts Organize":

Seventy of the Westcott kindred of northern New York, including ten members of our national Society, assembled at Westcott Beach, near Sackets Harbor, N.Y., on August 27th, to "know their kindred better."

The Westcotts of northern New York descend chiefly from Gardiner and Mary (Knight) Westcott, natives of Rhode Island, who after living a short time at Cheshire, Mass., settled at Deerfield (now North Utica, N.Y.) about 1793. Ten years later, with the majority of his eleven children, Gardiner removed to near Sackets Harbor where he died in 1808. He had over seventy grandchildren. When the English attacked Sackets Harbor in 1813, Celeb Westcott, son of Gardiner, almost singlehanded, held the invaders back until the American troops could arrive. A colonel of the troops was John Westcott, another son. The Westcotts therefore, are justified in the pride they hold in their beautiful and glorious north-country.

The following offers a few more details about the aforementioned Gardiner, Caleb, and George Westcott.

Gardiner Westcott (1744-1808)

Gardiner Westcott, a fifth generation descendant of Stukely and Juliana Westcott, was born on September 1, 1744, in Kingston, R.I., the third child and first son of Caleb Westcott and Hannah Gardiner. In 1764 he married Mary Knight of the Knightsville section of Cranston, R.I. and ran a small farm next to his in-laws.

Sometime after the Revolutionary War, during which he served in the Rhode Island Militia, Gardiner and his family moved to Cheshire, Massachusetts, and then in 1793, to Deerfield, New York. In 1805, he and nine of his children moved to Hounsfield Township, Jefferson County, New York, at first settling in Camp Mills and Field's Settlement. His wife Mary died sometime between 1787 (the birth of son Daniel) and 1805.

Caleb Westcott (born 1768)

Gardiner's first son Caleb Westcott moved with the family from Rhode Island to Deerfield, New York, where he married Eunice Nelson, with whom he had 11 children there and later in Sackets Harbor. He was a commissioned officer in two different regiments before and during the War of 1812. As noted in the Westcott Family Quarterly, Caleb was, in fact, successful in repelling the British forces in the Second Battle of Sackets Harbor (May 28 and 29, 1813), though probably not "singlehandedly," the credit usually going to General Jacob Brown. On May 29, 1813, the British forces came ashore in their second attempt to take Sackets Harbor and massed for an attack. The British could have been held in check, but riflemen from an Albany regiment panicked and dropped back. With Lieutenant Westcott rallying the local militia, General Brown was able bring up a 100 troops to flank the enemy. As U.S. reinforcements were arriving, the British thought better of enduring heavy fire and headed back to their ships outside the harbor.

Captain George Westcott (1813 to 1863)

George Wellington Westcott, the youngest of Caleb Westcott's 11 children, was born in Sackets Harbor on March 11, 1813, a little more than two months before his father's heroics. George earned his fame and fortune on Lake Ontario and the St. Lawrence as master of his schooner G.W. Westcott, and thus became known as "Captain George." In 1851, he purchased a 190-acre parcel on Chestnut Ridge three miles south of Sackets

Harbor and fronting Lake Ontario, where he built the family home, established a farm and operated the swimming area and picnic grounds that became known as Westcott Beach. That same year his brother Nelson, who was married to Sarah Bell, the sister of George's wife Catherine Bell, died on Lake Ontario when he was washed overboard while serving on the schooner Herald. George died from an accident on the farm on June 28, 1863.

George had two sons, Byron Murat Westcott and Nelson Lewis Westcott, who also were mariners and who, like their uncle Nelson, met with a tragic end on Lake Ontario, as recounted in a local newspaper:

On Friday, September 5, 1879, a sad casualty occurred in the town of Henderson, which resulted in the death of seven persons. Captain Byron M. Westcott and Nelson L. Westcott, owners of the sailboat West Wind, left Campbell's Point with a crew of seven men, intending to go to Henderson Harbor to participate in a yacht race. Soon after starting their boat sprung a leak and was immediately capsized by a sudden puff of wind. The boat was heavily ballasted and at once sank in 18 feet of water. Two of the men, Morgan Weeks and Charles Washburn, clung to the mast of the boat and were saved. The others attempted to swim to shore, about 60 rods distant, and were drowned. In addition to the Westcotts, the victims were Allen Ransey, Drake Lewis, Shuler Howard, Edgar York, and Edward Benjamin.

Byron Westcott had married Harriet Maria Murphy ten years earlier; Byron and Maria had two children, Belle and George Henry, who were five and four years old when their father drowned. On March 12, 1878, his brother Nelson married Harriet's sister, Sarah Murphy; Nelson and Sarah had one child, Frank Westcott, who was born two months after the drowning.

George and Tilly Westcott, Reunion Hosts

George Henry Westcott, the son of Byron Westcott and the grandson of Captain George Westcott was born on August 9, 1874. On September 20, 1902, he married Matilda Weeks. They lived in the Westcott house on Chestnut Hill where George grew up and ran the farm and the beach. They hosted the annual reunion of the Northern New York Chapter until, as one chapter member recalled in 1953, "the war and gas rationing" brought an end to the event. After George's death March 26, 1945, Tilly moved to Florida and the family sold the property to the State of New York in 1946.

Worth a Visit

It took Gardner Westcott and his family 17 years to get to the eastern shore of Lake Ontario. It need not take you that long to see Westcott Beach. The author recommends Westcott Beach as a stop on a 1000 Islands Tour of the lake side and the St. Lawrence Seaway. It's well worth it, and we no longer have gas rationing.

David Wescott Smith

Historian@SSWDA.org

Cousin Congratulations to: Sarah Kai Schaeffer #1196 promoted in the Coast Guard Reserves to Lt. Commander. She currently works for the U.S.Fish and Wildlife in Galloway Twp NJ.

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