

# Dress Family



The 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the St. Lorenz Lutheran church in 1895 celebrated five schools which the children of the St. Lorenz congregation and the children of other Frankenmuth residents attended. The Village School, or Eastern District as it was called, was a three-room school. The other schools were out in the country – the Northeastern, Northwestern, Western, and Southern Districts. These schools instructed 376 children in both the German and English languages.

In 1887, the Southeastern, and in 1889, the Tuscola, Districts were formed. The enrollment of the Eastern District increased rapidly, so instead of adding a fourth room, a new district was formed on the south side of the river. This became the Middle District, and it opened in August of 1901.

In the summer of 1902, Carl August Dress of Bremen, Indiana, was installed as teacher of the upper grades in the Eastern District. Carl and his family lived in a house built by the congregation in front of the school. The family participated in the Frankenmuth community and developed lifetime friendships. Carl, taught in Frankenmuth until 1912, then left to take a teaching position in Grand Rapids, Michigan. In 1923 he accepted a “call” to St. Michael’s Lutheran School in Frankenmuth, Michigan, now known as Richville. He taught there until 1937.

Carl’s father, Ernst Dress, was born on February 4, 1846, in Brockhausen Hannover, Germany. In 1853, he emigrated with his family and settled in Cleveland, Ohio. Ernst was a Lutheran school teacher during the years that the school system was expanding rapidly. In 1933, Ernst was the only survivor of that small group of teachers who were a part of that growth and known among the old-timers as “Die Fleischmaenner”.

Carl August Dress was born August 29, 1873 in Zanesville, Ohio to Ernst Henry and Anna Charlotte Brackesuehler. Carl was confirmed in Sebewaing, Michigan in 1887. After high school, he attended a business college in Cleveland, Ohio. In 1895, he entered Dr. Martin Luther College in New Ulm, Minnesota and graduated in 1897. Carl married Clara Brockmeyer on December 8, 1897 in Mankato, Minnesota.

Carl and Clara had three children: Elsie Dorothea born in Mankato, Minnesota on July 14, 1899; Eleanora Anna born in Frankenmuth, Michigan on February 20, 1904; and Walter Carl born in Frankenmuth, Michigan on April 30, 1909.

Elsie married George Belding, an attorney who became a judge in Dearborn, Michigan. Their daughter, Joanna Neale, is an attorney and presently Judge of Probate in Cheboygan County. Their son, Michael, graduated from Oberlin College and is currently with Ford Motor Company in Dearborn, Michigan.

Eleanora married Albert Forester, Secretary-Treasurer of General Electric Supply Company. Their daughter, Patricia, was a teacher in Fairfield, Connecticut.

Walter followed his father and grandfather’s footsteps by becoming a teacher. He was a junior high principal. He died at the early age of 26.

Carl Dress died in Richville in 1937. Clara Dress died in 1961.

The Dress and Brockmeyer sides of the family produced many teachers, ministers, and missionaries of the Lutheran Church, Missouri Synod.

