

1911 Maiden Lane,
Springfield, Ohio,
March 12, 1947.

Mr. Elvin Frantz,
3435 W. Van Buren St.,
Chicago, 24, Ill.

Dear Sir and Cousin:-

I received your letter telling about your contemplated trip East and that you will be in Springfield about April 11 or thereabouts. We will be very glad to have you look us up. There are many things to be seen in this vicinity that were connected with your ancestors. I am afraid that so far as my records are concerned that you are not contemplating stopping over long ~~enough~~ enough to be able to get much of an idea of the depth of family research into which I have gone. You know I have not confined myself to the Michael Frantz family, but have gathered data about different Frantzes wherever found. And there are Frantzes and ~~Frantz~~ Frantzes. Of course I have majored on our line.

If you want to see anything around here and get an idea of my work, it would be well for you to count on spending a night with us and at least a half day for riding around. Or perhaps you are making other arrangements for entertainment. But feel free to spend the time with us, if you have no other plans.

There may be a hitch in my being able to go around with you. I have been a semi invalid for the past year and a half and just recently underwent an operation, but I should be in better health by then. But I can surely be with you in our home if still alive, which I hope to be.

About visiting places in Lancaster County, history has not been any too good to us. In the first place, there were no meeting houses in Michael's time and for about 100 years afterward. Most of the county was still in forest and his getting around was either on horseback or far more likely--on foot. The roads were ungraded Indian paths through the woods with little to be seen except a streak of blue sky overhead. An occasional clearing along the road where a settler had started clearing out a farm, with a first built house, which was often a single room cabin hastily erected to tide the family over until opportunity came to erect a better one. And this house was often without a floor. It was a fact that the more pretentious houses, many of which are still in use, were left up to the second generation. And there is no record that I have been able to find, that Michael I, ever owned any land. It is very probable that he just worked around on the clearings as a day laborer or perhaps just for his meals, and devoted most of his time to the Lord. But there are three places you might take time to look up.-----

1 The Middlecreek Meeting House, and cemetery. This is located between Ephrata and Lititz. Just about half way between. It is located on Kiddle Creek. You might pick up a Brethren minister, as I did, to go with you and act as guide. I got a minister named Gibble, to whom Otho Winger had given me a letter of introduction. Middlecreek Church is the heart of what was known as Conestoga Church in Michael's time. And just through the fence

in the cemetery you will find a group of graves marked only with rough field stones. Picture this little group of graves without the rest of the cemetery and without the church and you have what is very probably "the little cemetery overlooking the Conestoga" which the "History of the Church of the Brethren of Eastern Pa." says 15 where Michael I, was buried. According to information I gathered names of persons in connection with any certain grave is probably lost forever. You can probably consult this church history at Bethany. Then the Whiteoak Church, which was the other church over which Michael was overseer was the vicinity of Lititz.

2 Then south of the Middlecreek church about $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles is the historic (to us) barn where Michael, after perhaps preaching a master piece of a sermon on the barn floor, at what is noted in this same history as a "great meeting" led the people out to the runway where he got a fence rail and placed it dividing the runway, and placing himself on one side, called upon the Brethren who wanted to remain with the Brethren to take position on one side of the rail with him and those who wanted to go with Conrad Biessel to step to the other and there and then the Brethren forever divorced themselves from Biessel who had been a disturbing element among them for some years, not adhering to the church doctrines. This barn is near some oil tanks. The big round kind of storage tanks. If you locate the tanks, the barn is just across a little side road, about 200 feet from the tanks.

3 The home farm of Michael Frantz II, is along U.S. Route 222, about $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles south and west of Reamstown. I do not know who owns the farm now. I have an attorney looking it up for me now. Expecting an answer any day. He got a patent to two tracts in that vicinity from the Penn family and it was here that the eight sons and one daughter were reared. I can give you no further information about its location at this time.

There are many Frantzes and related families living all over that and adjoining counties at the present time but so far as I have been able to find out, all descendants of the two Michaels have long since moved to other parts and as you know, they have always been in the van, moving forever onward toward the west. Washington, Oregon and California have oodles of them.

If you get to the Auto Club in Lancaster they will supply you with a map of Lancaster County for 25¢. It is free if you have a club membership. I didn't so had to pay. But it is worth it.

I will try to make you a little map that will locate these three places for you.

As you near Springfield, let us know about the time you will arrive.

There is a Kenneth Frantz from North Manchester now attending Bethany. He is a son of Oscar Frantz who lived at Holmesville many years. You no doubt know him. He was recently married.

Very sincerely yours,

Dore M. Frantz.

P.S.

At Middlecreek Cemetery, near the graves I mentioned, you will find the grave of Michael Pfautz, who succeeded Michael Frantz as elder in charge.